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Lyman Beecher

'S WORKS. VOL. III.

OF THEOLOGY;

AS DEVELOPED IN

E SERMONS,

AND ON

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INCINNATI, JUNE, 1835.

WITH

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BY

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of my trials, and the appeal to the Assem-
sports concerning me were circulated, and
judice environed me. But, with one excep-
Once, however, such a flood of misrepre-
he Seminary, as began to alarm some of my
ls. I, therefore, published a concise his-
which answered the purpose.
ports, an injurious review of my "VIEWS
hed in the *Princeton Repertory*. But at
ors and Seminary cares, and solicitation
ays four times in the week, and lecturing
nine months successively, did, with the
tical trials, so reduce my health, that I
wer it; and as it was limited to the circu-
as my one reply had provoked additional
hus afforded calls for twenty more, I
an aggressive controversy, and keep the
least for a time.
ength, that the article of the Princeton
one of two octavo volumes, as a public
I have deemed it a duty to myself, and
aring my works for the press, of my own
aid as I have needed, to prepare this
nent, as well as the reply to the Prince-
cined to my Views of Theology. It is

my hope to renew no unkind feeling or discussion, and only to stand CORRECTLY in the view of the present and coming generations.

Ever since the days of Edwards, there has been a conflict between the divines of New England and those of a portion of the Presbyterian Church. The New England divinity was born in a revival of religion, and was specially designed to promote revivals. It was held and propagated by the friends and promoters of great revivals. Against this theology, under the name of Hopkinsianism, a fierce assault was made. This was followed by a new campaign, in which the watchword was Taylorism.

Peculiar interest was felt in this conflict by the opposing Presbyterian party, because, by reason of the plan of union, early established at the proposal of the Presbyterian Church, New England divines were continually entering that Church, carrying with them their divinity, and their views of the expediency of prosecuting benevolent enterprises by means of voluntary associations, in which both Presbyterians and Congregationalists could coöperate. The result, however, was, at length, that New England theology and New England measures soon began to exert an increasing influence in the Presbyterian Church.

To counteract this influence, the opposing portion of the Presbyterian Church organized benevolent societies designed to promote their views, placed under the immediate control of the Church. Still, however, they did not arrest the course of events. The prevalence of New England views and measures still continued to increase, until finally, in five years out of seven, without any special effort beforehand, those who embraced them elected the Moderator, and controlled the measures of the General Assembly. To prevent such a state of things, their opponents had already, by an early foresight, added to their own a very respectable denomination, with its illustrious leader, to maintain the balance of power.

But, as still the danger pressed, but two courses seemed to remain to arrest the alarming progress of New England influence; either to intimidate the leaders and their flock by trials for heresy, and

exclusion from the Church, or to revolutionize the Church itself. They tried them both. In the attempt to convict me of fundamental error, contrary to the teachings of the Confession of Faith and the word of God, they could not approach a majority. They resorted, therefore, to the second course; and, having accidentally a majority, they expelled from the Church, without trial, and by lawless violence, enough of the New England element to restore to themselves the ascendency. Those thus expelled, and their friends, gathered themselves together on the basis of the constitution which had been so grossly violated, and organized the true constitutional General Assembly; and thus, as once before, was the Presbyterian Church rent in twain.

From this brief narration, it is plain that the trials to which I have referred were a great development of results in the theological history of this country. The accumulating influence of the conflicts of many years then came to a crisis. For this reason, it has appeared to me important to preserve a full account of those trials, as, perhaps, more fully than anything else representing the spirit and body of the times, and furnishing indispensable materials for the future history of our Church and nation.

Accordingly, I have taken pains to preserve in this volume, not only an account of the trial to which I was subjected, but the printed documents essential to a full understanding of it.

Of these, some were written before the outbreak of the general assault on the views of Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, and others subsequently. It is important, therefore, to say a few words respecting my relations to that controversy. The design of those who assailed Dr. Taylor was, if possible, to exclude him and his sentiments from the fellowship of the New England Churches. His most earnest opposer had been formerly known as a zealous and decided New England divinity man. But, alarmed at the spread of the opinions of Dr. Taylor, he undertook the work of assailing them, not only in New England, but in the Presbyterian Church. He, and his friends also, were desirous that I should engage

with them in the work of arresting Dr. Taylor's opinions. This, for many reasons, I refused to do. In the first place, I felt that I had a right to stand on independent ground, and not be swept in as a partisan on either side. Again, in many things of great moment I agreed with Dr. Taylor, although I did not adopt all parts of his system. Finally, I did not regard those parts of his system which were most violently assailed, even if erroneous, as of any such fundamental consequence as to exclude him from the fellowship of the New England and Presbyterian Churches.

For taking this ground, I was violently assailed in New England before my removal to the West, and also after my arrival there. Especially on my trial, great efforts were made to employ all that had, for these reasons, been written against me in New England, and all the odium and alarm which had been created against Dr. Taylor in the Presbyterian Church.

Before the coming up of this controversy, although well known for years as an Edwardean New England divine, I had enjoyed the affection and confidence of the leading men among the Princeton divines, and had been earnestly requested by them, as will soon appear, to enter the Presbyterian Church, they pledging to me their fellowship and coöperation. It cannot, therefore, be obscure what were the probable reasons of the effort to crush me, which was made just before and after I entered the Presbyterian Church. Then the Princeton and metropolitan power was relatively waning in the Church, and to prevent a result so unwelcome, three prominent leaders of the opposite party were successively put on trial, of whom I was counted worthy to be one.

The charges against me were chiefly based upon certain sermons of mine, of which those on the Native Character of Man hold the first place. These were published in 1827, and caused, at that time, no excitement or alarm anywhere. Much use was also made of my sermon on the Dependence and Free Agency of Man, published just before I left New England for the West, which also was received with general approbation. These are reprinted in the

commencement of the present volume. Reference was also made to the sermon on the Faith Once Delivered to the Saints, which has been already published in the second volume; and which, at the time of its publication, received the approval of Dr. Greene, then the honored father of the Presbyterian Church.

Among the documents written by others, and quoted against me, was one by an anonymous writer, signing himself an Edwardean,— a violent and bitter assailant of Dr. Taylor,— who to this day has not thought fit to assume the responsibility of writing a work which was so generally regarded with regret by his friends. Another was a letter to me, by the Rev. Asa Rand, the origin of which seems to have been his dissatisfaction that I did not adopt and defend those peculiarities of the taste scheme which he regarded as of fundamental importance. The object for which these documents were quoted was to produce the impression at the West that I was extensively regarded at the East as not sound in the faith, even before I removed from New England.

In addition to these things, strenuous efforts were made to connect me with whatever was peculiarly odious or alarming just at that time. In particular, the prosecutor sought to associate me with certain recent and odious developments of Perfectionism, with which I had never had any connection but as an opponent.

Moreover, as much alarm and hostility had been excited by the sentiments and measures of Mr. Finney, an attempt was also made to identify me with him.

When it is considered how inadequate and often erroneous were the views of many concerning the opinions of all with whom it was thus sought to identify me in odium, some faint conception may be formed, at this day, of the nature and power of the effort thus made to blast my reputation, and destroy my influence in the Presbyterian Church, especially in a Theological Seminary.

Recourse was had also to certain statements which I had made with reference to the incorporation of a false philosophy with the creeds of the Reformation, which seemed to implicate the standards

of the Presbyterian Church. These statements, however, were made on the assumption that the ancient interpretation, which had ever been regarded by New England divines as the true one, was, in fact, the true one. But about the time of my removal to the West this was called in question by Princeton divines, and a new exposition given to the terms of the creeds, which, obviating the difficulties I had always felt, and corresponding with my own belief, I adopted on my trial.

To make the matter plain, it is enough to advert to the fact, that on comparing the statements which I have made in vol. I. pp. 65—68, concerning the creeds of the Reformation, with my statements concerning them in my subsequent trials, at first sight there might appear to be an inconsistency between the two. There is, however, in fact, no inconsistency. The difference arises from the change just mentioned in the interpretation of the Confession of Faith, and of the creeds of the Reformation, on certain points. To illustrate this, we need only to refer to some prominent historical facts.

For many years the Edwardean divines of New England regarded the Confession of Faith as teaching the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, and their guilt and exposure to punishment for his act, in its strict sense, and according to the obvious and popular import of the language used. It was also regarded as teaching the absolute and natural inability of sinners to perform the duties demanded of them by God. To these doctrines were added the doctrine of a limited atonement, and of an eternal election based on such limitation. Not only did the New England divines suppose that these doctrines were taught in the Confession of Faith, but the old school Presbyterians of the Middle States asserted the same. On this ground they were assailed by Whelpley in his "Triangle." Nor in reply did they ever intimate that they did not regard the doctrines which he assailed as the true sense of the Confession of Faith. It was with this view of the import of these standards that

I used the language referred to, and all similar language used before my removal to the West.

It so happened, however, that, about the time of my removal, the Princeton divines, under the stress of their controversies with New England, introduced a new exposition of the Confession of Faith on the most important and difficult of these points,—I refer to the imputation and guilt of Adam's sin. In this they denied all that the New England divines had opposed,—namely, a mysterious union with Adam, so as literally to sin in his sin; or a transfer of his moral character to us; or any real and proper guilt for his act, and any true and proper punishment for it. They contended that the words *guilt* and *punishment* were not to be taken in their common and popular sense, but in a sense strictly technical and theological, to denote social liability to evil, in consequence of the act of Adam, which evil is technically called punishment.

These views were set forth at length in the *Princeton Repertory* and in Hodge's Commentary on the Romans; and it was affirmed that they had been the views of the Reformers from the beginning, and of the Orthodox as far back as to the days of Augustine. Of this they quoted what seemed to be sufficient proof.

The effect of this was a renunciation of the old Triangular interpretation (so called), by which the Confession of Faith was brought into accordance with the views which New England divines and I myself had always defended, rejecting what we had always regarded as false and pernicious theories, interwoven with the real doctrines of the Gospel. In these circumstances, I saw no reason for not adopting this mode of interpreting the Confession, and did adopt it. I also so interpreted the language used to express the sinner's inability as to accord with my interpretation of similar language in the Bible; that is, so as to denote moral inability, or a strong and voluntary aversion to duty. The doctrine of limited atonement I do not regard as taught in the Confession.

As thus interpreted, it is plain that the Confession of Faith is free from the false theories which, according to the first mode of

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[illegible] this interpretation of Princeto [illegible] Triangular theology, which fo [illegible] the New England divines. [illegible] but they gave them a New [illegible] was the true and original [illegible]

[illegible] seem to have pursued an uncer- [illegible] their late ground, [illegible] have quoted, with applause, [illegible] in the very sense in [illegible] Whether this has arisen from [illegible] change of opinion, or from [illegible] to say.

[illegible] as true, — that there are [illegible] Old World, who are not yet [illegible] exposition of the standards of [illegible] such a sense as to be exposed [illegible] directed against that exposi- [illegible]

[illegible] the recent Princeton exposition of [illegible] as the true one, for it is by all means [illegible] documents so ancient and powerful [illegible] On this supposition, I wish my [illegible] as directed against the standards, [illegible] and injurious interpretation of

RMON I.

E AND FREE AGENCY.

an do nothing."—JOHN 15: 5.

he Bible, that Jesus Christ is the
iverse. Everywhere the attributes,
ch belong to God, are ascribed to
nipresence, omnipotence, eternity,
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is works are such as correspond with
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nning said, "Let there be light, and
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ence, and self-sustained physical action. The other is a dependence resulting from our sinful character, and the consequent necessity of an atonement and a moral renovation to secure our pardon and meetness for heaven.

I propose, in this discourse, to give a Scriptural account of the dependence of man upon Jesus Christ, in both these respects; as a creature and as a sinner.

As a creature, it is obvious that man is dependent on Christ for all his natural and moral powers. In his material organization, it was Christ that "did see his substance yet being unperfect, and in whose book all his members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." It was Christ who created his mind, his power of thought, and of mental and moral action; his perception, judgment, reason; his capacity of happiness and misery; his ability — under the guidance and influence of the government of God — to choose the good and refuse the evil. These are all attributes given him in creation, and from the constitution according to which his being will be continued.

But is there, in this beautiful structure of body and mind, any self-preserving energy, that can dispense with the constant upholding power of Christ? None. Nothing is self-existent but God. "In him [Christ] we live, and move, and have our being." That he is as able to create mind as to create matter, who can doubt? That he is as able to create accountable agents, to be governed by the laws and administration of his moral kingdom, as to create animals to be governed by appetite and instinct, who will deny? And that he has created and does uphold and govern man, as a rational, free, and accountable agent, we know, not only from his own

r, but from our own perfect consciousness.

nt from Revelation, that men are de-
t for the successful application of their
springs of life and the occasions of
sposal. The great laws of nature are
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ere, health follows the journeys of the
ves commandment, the poisonous epi-
and wraps around the earth the belt
o skill that can fortify against it, no
t, no power that can resist it. And
here are no perils that can baffle his
arst into being, and rise up under his
asure melt away like vapors before the

on Christ for successful effort extends
all as to the physical nature of man.
f disease, he can send upon the mind
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Providence depend, also, not only our
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of acting the part which they acted.
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uman greatness, even with opportunity,
ul execution of the wisest plans; for
erable contingencies, unforeseen to any
upon natural causes, unmanageable by
pon human volitions, affected by the
cluded in the ever-varying Providence
ssions and prejudices and conflicting

interests of men. Nothing is more impenetrable than the veil which hides from man those events of futurity which depend on human volitions and actions.

Such is the dependence of man upon Christ as a creature. But there is another kind of dependence, resulting from his character and condition as a sinner. This condition is hopeless, without Christ. Direct forgiveness of sin, on condition of repentance, is impossible, upon principles of law. To make an atonement, was what man could not do; and to save without an atonement, was "what the law could not do." The influence of law depends on its rewards and its penalties. Suspend these, and you paralyze its power, and in the same degree you impair its influence upon the mind, and open the door to rebellion and anarchy.

For that influence, therefore, which sustains the law of God, and opens the door of mercy to a lost world, men are dependent on the Lord Jesus Christ. The law could not forgive and maintain its power. Angels could make no atonement, and no man could redeem his brother. Works could not justify, and the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, could not take away sin. Thousands of rams, and of rivers of oil, and the blood of the first-born, could not purchase redemption. The inability of man to make an atonement for sin was therefore a natural impossibility, absolute and entire.

It must be added, also, that, as sinners, men are dependent on Christ for a willingness to do anything which will save their souls. This is not a dependence created by any such constitutional defect of mind as renders obedience to the extent of divine requirement a natural impossibility; or by any destruction which sin has occasioned of the powers requisite to free agency and accountability. These all remain, per-

verted, indeed,— wholly perverted, and hopeless of recovery without the grace of God,— but not annihilated, or impaired in respect to their competency to create perfect obligation, and to sustain, in joy or in woe forever, all the responsibilities of the government of God, as obeyed or disobeyed.

Man is not so constituted as that no choice, good or evil, can be originated by him, which God, by an immediate efficiency, does not produce. Nor is he made accountable for a nature which was created in him as really as his intellect or his bones and sinews; nor for moral qualities, which are as involuntary as his appetites or his instincts, and which render choice, not in accordance with them, a natural impossibility.

The dependence of man upon Christ is in no sense the dependence of his deficient constitution as a free agent, but of his deficient character as a sinner,— the obstinate perversion of his free agency. Still it is a dependence not the less real or certain: for a sinner may wilfully make his destruction certain, and render grace indispensable to avert his ruin. It is this kind of dependence, originating in the obliquity of the will, which meets and baffles our unaided efforts at every step of our attempt to persuade men to be reconciled to God.

Who, without the grace of Christ, can keep back from sin the depraved mind of individuals and communities; or rouse man from the deep slumbers of a willing ignorance and obstinate stupidity; or bring home the commandment, and flash in upon the dark unwilling mind the painful conviction of sin? And even when this is done, who can subdue the will, but He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,— but He who stilled the raging tempest on the sea,— before whom disease fled, and death yielded up its victims? It is in the day of His power only that any sinner ever submits

to God, and becomes a willing subject of his perfect government.

It seems to be thought by sinners, when they are awakened, and pressed with obligation to submit, that their act of refusal is not of the same nature with other acts of choice; that if it be in some sense voluntary, it is in a sense so unique as greatly to mitigate, if not to annihilate, its criminality.

But, in respect to its being the voluntary *action* of the mind, it is as really so as any act of choice whatever, and is distinguished from ordinary volitions only by this,—that it includes and absorbs, more entirely than any other, the whole energy of the mind, and comprehends in it the greatest amount and intensity of criminal purpose of which a sinful mind is capable. It is the most voluntary and the most criminal decision of which a sinner is capable, and made in defiance of the most perfect obligations to the contrary. Thus the Holy Ghost decides, when he comes to reprove the world of sin, because they believe not. And yet it is a decision, in point of fact, irrevocable, but by the grace of God.

It seems to be a fact, in the history of perverted mind, that, once ruined, it never recovers itself. In fallen angels it has not, in fallen man it does not; but the disease rages on, unreclaimed by its own miseries, and only exasperated by rejected remedies. The way of man is not in himself. Wise is he to do evil, but to do good he has no knowledge. The main-spring of the soul for holy action is gone, and divine influence is the only substitute. It is the sinner's duty to repent, but he refuses. It is his duty to come to Christ, but he will not. His carnal mind is enmity against God, and he *will not submit. His* heart is fully set within him to do

evil, and he will not turn. Motives and obligation are by his obstinacy swept away. The blood of Christ and the joys of heaven plead in vain; and in vain are hell and destruction uncovered before him.

> "Madness, by nature, reigns within,
> The passions burn and rage;
> Till God's own Son, with skill divine,
> The inward fire assuage."

I have only to add, what is especially taught in the text, that for the continuance and consummation of holiness every Christian is dependent on Christ. When the heart is renewed, it possesses no self-preserving energy. If angels, great in might and perfect in holiness, and Adam, our ancestor, created after the image of God, could fall, how feeble is the guarantee of the continuance and consummation of holiness from the sufficiency of its own feeble beginnings! The question has been asked, whether it is possible for a saint to fall; and the answer is, that, left to himself, and aside from the preservation of Christ, it is not only possible that he may fall, but certain that he will fall. Not because his growth in grace and perseverance is a natural impossibility; not because he cannot so watch, and pray, and strive, and fight, as to endure to the end; but because, through remaining sin, and deceitfulness, and sloth of heart, he will not watch, and pray, and strive, and fight, so as to obtain the victory, except as Jesus watches over him, and intercedes for him, and sustains, and protects, and guides, and gives him the victory.

To this plain Scriptural account of man's dependence on Christ for his capacities and powers of action as a free agent, and also for their restoration by grace to their unperverted

exercise, it might seem as if no objection could be raised; and yet no subject has been beset with objections more numerous, acute, or perplexing. To some of these I propose to attend, in the sequel of this discourse.

Objection 1. It is objected that the doctrine of dependence on the sovereign grace of God for the commencement and continuance of evangelical obedience is *inconsistent* with the doctrine of man's free agency and accountability: — that the two doctrines never have been and never will be reconciled: — that all who have made the attempt have but darkened counsel by words without knowledge; — and that all who preach man's dependence on the Holy Spirit for regeneration, and then call upon him to repent, and obey the Gospel, contradict, in one part of their discourse, what they inculcate in another."

Answer. If the dependence of a sinner upon the special influence of the Spirit for ability to obey the Gospel were occasioned by such a constitution of mind as renders obedience a natural impossibility — for want of adequate powers, or knowledge, or motives — then it would be impossible to reconcile such dependence with accountability; and it might truly be said they never have been and never will be reconciled.

It must certainly be admitted that, if God should command exercises which man can no more put forth than he can create a world, and should not himself work in him to produce them, it would be the requisition of a natural impossibility, which could not be reconciled with a just accountableness. Or, if he should command a change of moral tastes or instincts, which are a part of the soul's created constitution, upon which the will cannot act, but which do themselves govern the will as absolutely as the helm governs the ship, then, also, the *thing required* would be a natural impossibility, and could not

be reconciled with free agency and accountability. But where is the inconsistency with free agency and accountability in the present case?

God commands the sinner to obey the Gospel; and the sinner, thoroughly furnished with all the powers and means of moral agency, refuses to obey. Rewards, threatenings, entreaties, expostulations, judgments and mercies, exhaust their power upon him, and he refuses; *he will not come to Christ, and resists always the Holy Ghost.* And what is there here to destroy free agency? Who puts forth a more giant free agency than the sinner, fully set to do evil? Would flexible wickedness be blamable, and is inflexible obstinacy blameless? If depraved a little, would he have no cloak for his sin; and do his crimes whiten, and his obligations fail, as his heart strengthens itself in opposition to God?

"But, if he will not repent unless God, by his special grace, interpose, how can he be to blame?" He can be to blame, because it is his duty to repent on the ground of his capacity and the divine requirement, and he refuses. He can be to blame, as the drunkard can be for his intemperance, because he is able and only unwilling to reform; as the thief can be, though he may never cease to do evil; as the pirate can be, though he may go on to shed blood till justice overtakes him.

"But is not his destruction certain, if the Lord does not have mercy upon him?" Most assuredly. "Well, then, how can he be to blame?" Because, with the plenary powers of a free agent, he has violated the law of the universe, and trodden under foot the blood of atonement, and despised the riches of the goodness of God, until public justice demands his death. Cannot a criminal deserve punishment unless some way is open for his actual escape from punishment,—

a way, too, which shall overrule his own contemptuous and obstinate rejection of proffered mercy?

And what has the certainty of his perseverance in evil to do with the reality of his free agency, or the mitigation of his guilt? Is uncertainty of choice and character essential to virtue? There is not a maxim of greater folly. Who does not know that good and ill desert in character rises with the relative certainty of its continuance? Is not the glorious God worthy of all praise, and Jesus Christ of all confidence, and Satan of all execration, though the choice and character of each will never change? And is not this the decision of common sense? Whose virtue and vice have reached their height or degradation more entirely than those, on the one hand, whose integrity is not suspected of change, or whose baseness, on the other, is hopeless of reformation? The sinner can be accountable, then, and he is accountable, for his impenitence and unbelief, though he will not turn, and God may never turn him, because he is able and only unwilling to do what God commands, and which, being done, would save his soul. Indeed, to be able and unwilling to obey God is the only possible way in which a free agent can become deserving of condemnation and punishment. So long as he is able and willing to obey, there can be no sin; and the moment the ability of obedience ceases, the commission of sin becomes impossible.*

OBJECTION 2. "This distinction between the ability of man as a free agent, and his inability as a sinner, is a mere metaphysical subtilty, which common minds cannot understand, and which is only calculated to perplex and bewilder."

ANSWER. It is not a metaphysical subtilty, nor a distinc-

* *Dr. Wilson* founds one charge of heresy on this passage.

But the course of evidence in these dis-
l a universal and appalling moral defect
ars just such a change necessary as the
le indicates, according to its most direct
To be without religion is to be *dead in*
renewed by the Spirit as to love God
raised from the dead, and *born of*
change without which no man can see

ndispensable, must also be a *perceptible*
ion to the means of grace, and growing
citude which precede it, are progressive,
increase of holiness and evidence of the
ange itself from selfishness to holiness
e of the world to supreme love of God —
e, but an instantaneous change. This
presentations of the Bible. It is a new
ion from the dead, &c. I do not say that
eives, at the time, the moment of transi-
iving that a change of some kind has
eives at once the evidence that it is a
t unfrequently days and weeks may pass
dare to hope; and sometimes the truly
pprehension of their evidence, may for
th doubts and fears concerning their state.
is real, and great, and instantaneous,
has loved the world supremely, first sets
ngs above, is self-evident. It would be
lations of life, to talk of unperceived affec-
mother, husband or wife; and equally
ition of loving God more than the world,
ace of any perceptible change.

his eyes open, or his own existence against consciousness. And this consciousness of accountability, attached to his own voluntary action, man ascribes, by analogy, to the voluntary actions of other man; and never, in his own case, or in the case of others, ascribes it to any actions which are not voluntary, but which are instinctive or coërced.

This is the basis of all distinction between right and wrong, which pervades the family in its moral government, and which runs through all the forms of human association in civil government. And no doubt the same analogy guides the judgment and feelings of angels, and all the high intelligences of the universe; insomuch, that the intellect and the consciousness of the universe must be unmade and reversed, before the justice of God can be reconciled with the requisition of natural impossibilities, and the punishment of subjects for not doing what they could not; and an equal reverse of the constitution and public opinion of the universe must take place, before the voluntary, obstinate refusal to obey the commands of God, as a practicable and reasonable service, shall fail to bring out from the obedient and disobedient alike the universal decision of guilt and just condemnation.

Is it a metaphysical trifle, then, whether God commands effects in his moral government, without an adequate ground or reason in his subjects for their existence? Is it not the pivot on which turns the question of its rectitude or injustice, of the riches of its goodness and mercy, or its unparalleled cruelty and severity? If the command to perform natural impossibilities, and punishment for their non-performance, is not unjust, what is unjust? What could the most high God do that would be unjust?

It has been said that, "though man has lost his ability to *obey, God has not lost his* right to command." But can the

ediately to love and repent, and warn him
s of heart as the consequence of delay?
re destitute of religion by nature, its com-
oul is at all times sudden. There is a
ho loved the world more than God begins
han the world. He may not in a moment
it.

fore you the evidence that men are not
e; and that this destitution implies the
depravity of man, and the necessity of a
ange in the affections, by the special influ-
pirit. This is not a matter of abstract
ractical utility. Our being and accounta-
and the law of God, which is the rule of
l. Heaven is a religious world, and the
e, and our only state, of probation and
ven. Here, in this morning of our being,
rmed of an immutable character in the
if that which is first formed is one that
, and fits us for destruction, can we too
erceive it, or too deeply feel it, or too ear-
conformed in our affections to the require-
l, to the conditions of pardon, and to the
eavenly state? What, then, is the im-
ou will make of these discourses, whose
you have no religion? Will you say that
ings, and that you do not like such doc-
therefore untrue, because it is painful?
e you, in the presence of such evidence,
f the dictates of mere inclination? Will
fort to such as endeavor to explain away
speak to you smooth things, and prophesy

down with our creeds to amuse the ear, and keep off odium from a system of real fatality?

By natural ability, I mean what the law of God means, when it says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy HEART, and with all thy SOUL, and with all thy STRENGTH, and with all thy MIND;" and what the Gospel means, when, in the form of a parable, it declares, that he gave "to every man according to his several ability," and that the moral obligation to improve corresponded with the *talents* given, and the ability possessed for their improvement.

I mean, that God does not reap where he has not sowed, or gather where he has not strewed; but requires according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not,—much of him to whom much is given, and little of him to whom little is given.

I mean, that God knows how to create intelligent beings, with such powers of mind that, being upheld and placed under law, they are so capable of obedience as to create perfect and infinite obligation to obey; the violation of which brings upon the sinner a just condemnation to eternal death.

I mean, what the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches means,* that "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to do good or evil;" so that by his decrees "neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the

* See articles "Free Will," and "Of God's Eternal Decree," in Cambridge and Saybrook Platform, and in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church.

ER'S TRIAL FOR HERESY:

ESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI, JUNE, 1835.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

· trial for heresy, at the West, in 1835, which fol-
reported for the *New York Observer*, at the time,
?resbytery of Cincinnati; with the incorporation of
rer form which it took in my "Views of Theology,"
at the request of the Synod.

L. B.

· of Cincinnati, to which Dr. Beecher
ljourned meeting in that city, on Tuesday,
35. The Court consisted of the following

L. Wilson, D.D., Lyman Beecher, D.D.,*
on, Daniel Hayden, Francis Monfort,
Ludwell G. Gaines, Sayres Gasley, Ben-
rk), Artemas Bullard, John Burt, F. Y.
nerd, A. T. Rankin, Calvin E. Stowe ‡
istus Pomroy, George Beecher, Adrien

Theology,
Ecclesiastical History, } in Lane Seminary.
Languages,

OBJECTION 5. "If man, as a free agent, is able of himself to repent and obey the Gospel, and is only dependent as a sinner, then the atonement was unnecessary, and he may be his own Saviour."

ANSWER. We have seen that the dependence of man on Christ for an atonement was created by the natural impossibility of his making one. It was what the law could not do, and man could not do, and none but Christ could do. But the sinner's dependence on the Holy Ghost is occasioned by his wilful refusal to accept the atonement. Had he been willing to accept an atonement, he could not have made one. But his voluntary and obstinate rejection of the atonement made for him, and offered to him, is what renders the Holy Spirit indispensable to his salvation.

OBJECTION 6. "This distinction between man's natural ability, as a free agent, and his dependence only as a sinner, is a mere human theory, not taught in the Bible."

ANSWER. *It is a distinction taught in the Bible as plainly, variously and copiously, as any other doctrine whatever.* It has the same relation to the system of revealed truth which the being of God has, and his moral government, and the sinfulness of man, and the atonement, and renovation by the Spirit, and justice in condemnation, and grace and mercy in redemption. Like the doctrine of cause and effect in the natural world, it is assumed; like the being of God, it is taken for granted, and constantly acted upon; like the existence of man, and of the world, it is treated as a matter of fact.

Besides, capacity, as the ground and measure of obligation, is expressly recognized as a fundamental principle of the government of God. The law itself recognizes it, in demanding love with all the heart, soul, mind and strength. The

in the bestowment of talents upon every
several ability, and the award of punish-
ected; and by repelling as a slander the
demands the performance of impossible
; he had not sowed, &c. Obligation is
according to what a man hath, and not
hath not,—much of him to whom much
him to whom little is given. Accord-
edience is ever enjoined as a reasonable
as to natural power, every man is
and for the neglect of which he has no
; represented as the mind's action, and a
mand. "Come unto me, all ye that
; a new heart and a new spirit, for why
r son, give me thine heart." "Believe
Christ." "Repent ye." "Turn your-
"Humble yourselves in the sight of the
me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."
and moral acts, commanded under the
f eternal life or eternal death, as utterly
of man, as the making of worlds, or
nstead of this, unbelief is regarded as the
ungrateful, wanton act of moral suicide,
refusing him, setting him at naught,
his blood, always resisting his Spirit, and
f the goodness of God. So far is it from
tural impotency, and so needless is it,
a most wonderful phenomenon. "What
e more to my vineyard that I have not
ore, when I looked that it should bring
it it forth wild grapes?" "Hear, O
r, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken:—
*

I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." "He marvelled because of their unbelief." But is it wonderful that nurtured children should not do impossible things? Is it wonderful that a vineyard, however cultivated, should not produce impossible fruits? Could it be marvellous that those to whom an act of faith was as impossible as an act of creation should not work miracles in its production?

But it is admitted that no new faculties are created in regeneration. What, then, is there to be changed, but the will? This, as we have seen, is the change commanded. Alienation is the crime, reconciliation the duty. Hence the means employed by Heaven are moral,— the law of the Lord, the word of God, the incorruptible seed, the Gospel, the cross of Christ, the blood of Christ. But what fitness have moral means for overcoming natural impossibilities? The Gospel might as well be employed to govern the material universe, instead of the law of gravity, as to recover alienated mind, if the impediments to obedience are natural impossibilities. And, after all, who has ever detected the mental incapacity of man to obey the Gospel? The motive to do it has been immense, and has wrought powerfully in innumerable cases; yet no defective organization has been found. On the contrary, every attribute which can be conceived as requisite to the full capacity of obedience is discovered; and such as under every form of government, beside that of God, is admitted to constitute entire capacity, and perfect accountability. The sinner has, indeed, abundant evidence, that to turn to God is difficult; evidence enough to close forever upon him every avenue of hope, if the Lord does not have mercy. But he has no evidence that the difficulty consists in *the want of capacity for* evangelical action. On the contrary,

none that doeth good; no, not one." This is the declaration of God concerning the children of men: the result of an omniscient investigation, made expressly to decide whether the effects of the fall were universal, or whether any religious affection remained. The apostle Paul quotes this declaration of the Most High to prove, and he says that it does prove, "both Jews and Gentiles" (terms which then included all men), "that they are all under sin." But to be under sin is to be under its dominion, and under condemnation; for he proves the fact, that all are under sin, to cut off the hope of justification by the deeds of the law, and to establish the doctrine of justification by faith. But to be under the dominion of sin, and in an *unjustified* condition, is surely inconsistent with the existence of religion. To corroborate his argument, the apostle quotes the following passage from the Old Testament, and he quotes it that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." Now, abate from this passage as much as is possible on the ground of metaphor, yet, as it is quoted in a regular argument to stop every mouth, and to prove the whole world guilty before God, it does most certainly exclude the supposition of piety in those who are thus characterized. An open sepulchre is not the place of life; the poison of asps is not an emblem of health; and cursing and bitterness are not the fruits of the Spirit; nor are destruction and misery found in the ways of wisdom; nor can it ever be of the truly pious that they have no fear of God before

Hence, as obstinate disobedience to law and Gospel cannot cancel obligation or avert condemnation, those are punished with everlasting destruction to whom no special grace has been afforded, on the simple ground of the perversion of their capacities, as free agents, to purposes of evil. It is not grace resisted alone, but the ability of man perverted and abused, that brings down upon him aggravated guilt and condemnation. The influence of the Spirit belongs wholly to the remedial system. Whereas ability commensurate with requirement is the equitable and everlasting foundation of the eternal moral government of God.

What was it which stopped the mouth of the man without a wedding garment? Would he have stood speechless, could he have replied truly that no garment had been provided for him? or that it was such an one as no human power could put on, while no divine power had been sent to his aid?

I am aware that *inability of some kind to obey the Gospel is ascribed to man in the Bible.* But it means the *impossibility* of becoming holy by any philosophical culture of the natural powers, or by any possible modification of our depraved nature, or simply by the inflexibility of an iron will. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed *can* be. So then they that are in the flesh *cannot* please *God.*" "No man *can* serve two masters." "Ye *cannot* serve God and mammon." "How *can* ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "How *can* ye, being *evil, speak good things?*" Do these and similar passages

absolute natural impossibility for an
come reconciled to God,— to crucify the
d in spirit,— to abandon mammon and
ive up the praise of men, and seek the
om God? What greater injustice could
iolence to the Bible, than to represent
s of his government upon the heart as
l impossibilities, under the fearful sanc-
h? Again, it is said, "No man *can*
the Father which hath sent me draw
e ye *can* do nothing." But do these
ntend a natural impossibility? Do they
guage appropriately expressing a fixed
untary, and worthy of blame?
axim of interpretation, which lies at the
sition, and of all intelligible intercourse
signs, which sends a beam of light on
at the Bible, and forbids us to give to
port of natural inability, and compels us
s declaring only the inflexible obstinacy
maxim is, that language is to be under-
with the known attributes of the subject.
represented as legislating for the natural
out his commandment, and all nature
ices, obeys and praises Him; are we per-
l that the material creation, in all its
and comets, and worlds, and winds, and
s, and hills, and valleys, and cattle, and
cluster of so many intelligences, blessed
of God, and pressed, by the responsibili-
creatures, to obey and to praise him?
ply because we are acquainted with the

attributes of these things, and, from the known absence of intellect and voluntary power, are constrained to understand the phraseology as the language of metaphor.

By what authority, then, when we enter the moral kingdom of God, composed of mind, and law, and free agency, and accountability, and justice, and grace, and reward, and punishment, do we disregard the known attributes of accountable mind, and the revealed maxims of the divine moral government, and give to inability, when applied to voluntary beings and commanded duties, a passive and material import? Was there ever a greater, or a more needless, or a more pernicious, perversion of the laws of exposition? When the entire authority of heaven is made to bear on rational, immortal, accountable creatures, under the high responsibilities of eternal life or eternal death, and these commands are enforced by entreaty and expostulation, and their disregard is threatened with eternal ruin,—when the glory of God is to shine through eternity in his justice, and the riches of his goodness in his mercy,—is the dark lantern of human inability the only surface upon which the light is to fall that is to reflect upon principalities and powers, in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God? No language is more frequent, in the common intercourse of men, than the terms *unable*, *cannot*, and the like, to express either slight or determined and unchanging aversion. And the same use of these terms pervades the Bible. Inability, meaning only voluntary aversion, or permanent choice or disinclination, is ascribed to God, to Christ, and to good men, in as strong terms as inability to obey the Gospel is ascribed to sinners.

1. To God. "God, that *cannot* lie." "The new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I *cannot* away with."

Samuel stood before me, yet my mind
his people."
Ie *could there do no* mighty work."
have gathered thy children together,
th her chickens under her wings, and

" *Can* ye drink of the cup that I drink
s born of God doth not commit sin, for
him, and he CANNOT sin, because he is
natural impossibility for a Christian to

men. "This is a hard saying, who
l Joshua said unto the people, Ye *can-*
r he is a holy God." "So we see that
in, because of unbelief." "They that
ot please God." None of these are
, and only moral inabilities, consisting
ion.
that nowhere do the Scriptures attach
resulting from inadequate powers, fac-
: means; and everywhere they do hold
re the natural capacity is entire, and
ly unwilling to obey. There is not an
n the Bible, in which, according to the
tion, a natural impossibility of perform-
r which God has required is ascribed to

This doctrine of man's ability as a free
ndence on Christ only as a sinner, is an
ceived doctrine of the orthodox church,
ceding exposition cannot be regarded as

correct. Has the entire church, in all ages, misunderstood the Bible?"

ANSWER. *The facts in the case are just the other way. The doctrine of man's free agency and natural ability as the ground of obligation and guilt, and of his impotency of will by reason of sin, has been the received doctrine of the orthodox church in all ages.*

The Christian fathers taught the free agency of man, in opposition to the Stoics, who taught the doctrine of fate; to the Gnostics, who taught a material depravity; and to the Manicheans, who taught a mental depravity in the essence of the soul. They taught free will,—not like Pelagius, in opposition to *a bias of will to evil, occasioned by the fall*, but in opposition to a natural impossibility of right action. In this view, with the Gnostic and Manichean heresies before them, Justin Martyr says: "The doctrine of the Christians is this — that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil *according to his own free choice.*" And Origen says: "The soul acts *by her own choice*, and it is *free* for her to incline to whatever part *she will.*" And Chrysostom, and Cyprian, and Jerome, are equally full and explicit on the subject.* Indeed, as Calvin says in substance, and as is common in such circumstances, they leaned off so far from fatality and material and mental depravity created in the soul — as doctrines violating common sense, and tending to sloth — that sometimes they seemed by the capacity of free will to supersede the necessity of special grace, though in other places they teach that man is despoiled of all strength to recover himself to holiness by

* See quotations, in Edwards on the Will, part II. sect. 5, and in Whitby on the Five Points, Discourse IV. chaps. 4 and 5.

ribe everything that is good in man to
They were far, certainly, from being
nd further still from being correct phil-
tion of the Bible. And yet they did per-
hold upon the two cardinal points,— of
the ground of his obligation; and of his
l grace for his restoration to holiness.
on was made in the controversy between
gius. They did not use the term *free will*
owever, as the earlier fathers. In this
to be employed in opposition to fatalism
ital depravity, and to teach free agency
apacity of choice. The natural ability of
and as the foundation of moral obliga-
punishment, was not denied, but was
oth sides. The dispute respected wholly
as affected by the fall, and particularly
t is *powerfully biased to evil, or re-*
is, and equally inclined to good as to
so competent by its own power, under
of truth, to recover itself to holiness as
or is so biased and sinfully impotent
tual reformation hopeless but by the
the Holy Spirit. Augustine insisted
ll to evil, in consequence of the fall, and
ing energy; while Pelagius denied the
of the fall, and asserted the sufficiency of
suasion of truth to the purposes of spir-

erefore, made in this discourse, between

*, book II. chap. 2, sects. 4 and 9.

the ability of man as a free agent, and his dependence as a sinner, *was recognized by Augustine, and by the earlier fathers.*

The same distinction was made by the Reformers, and by the Calvinists down to the Synod of Dort.

Luther taught the natural liberty of man as a free agent, and the bondage of his will as a totally-depraved sinner. "There is," he says, "no restraint either on the divine or human will. In both cases the will does what it does, whether good or bad, simply, and as at perfect liberty, in the exercise of its own faculty. . . . So long as the operative grace of God is absent from us, everything we do has in it a mixture of evil; and, therefore, of necessity, our works avail not to salvation. Here I do not mean a necessity of compulsion, but a necessity *as to the certainty of the event.* A man who has not the spirit of God does evil willingly and spontaneously. He is not violently impelled, against his will, as a thief is to the gallows. But the man cannot alter his disposition to evil; nay, even though he may be externally restrained from doing evil, he is averse to the restraint, and his inclination remains still the same. Again, when the Holy Spirit is pleased to change the will of a bad man, the new man still acts voluntarily; he is not compelled by the Spirit to determine contrary to his will, but his will itself is changed, and he cannot now do otherwise than love the good, as before he loved the evil;" * that is, a man cannot choose opposites at the same time; cannot choose against a present choice which yet remains.

Calvin declares that God is voluntary in his goodness; Satan in his wickedness; and man in his sin. "We must

* De Servo Arbitrio, as quoted in Milner's Church History, vol. v. cent. 16, chap. 12, sect. 2.

he says, "that man, having been cor-
sins voluntarily, not with reluctance or
strongest propensity of disposition, not
; with the bias of his own passions, and
ompulsion." He quotes Bernard, as
tine, in saying, "Among all the animals,
nd yet, by the intervention of sin, he suf-
iolence, but from the will, not from
is not thereby deprived of his innate
gustine and the Reformers speak, indeed,
he will, and of the necessity of sinning,
lity that a natural man should turn and
grace; but they explain themselves to
of continuance in sin which arises from a
, and not from any natural impossibility.
'— they say expressly—"is voluntary."
with a yoke, but no other than that of
therefore our servitude renders us mis-
renders us inexcusable." *
rt say: "Sincerely and most truly God
hat is pleasing to him; namely, that they
ld come to him. That many who are
and are not converted,—the fault of this
, nor in Christ offered by the Gospel, nor
the Gospel, and conferring various gifts
persons themselves who are invited." †
an is endued with such a liberty of will as
ward compulsion and inward necessity,
faculty of applying itself to that which
Iost free it is in all its acts, both in regard

* book II. chap. 3, sect. 5.
† he Synod of Dort, chaps. III. and IV. sects. 8 and 9.

to the object it chooseth, and in regard to that vital power and faculty whereby it worketh."

It is true that the Reformers, and the disciples of Calvin, employ language, sometimes, which seems to deny the very existence of that natural ability which they concede, and to confound all distinctions between natural and moral government, and to throw mankind into one dark mass of impotency and death, from which any resurrection by human power is a natural impossibility. But a fair interpretation of their language will, for the most part, rescue them from this imputation. And, besides, what is said loosely and oratorically by men is never to be so interpreted as to set aside their most careful, deliberate, elementary definitions. We have shown that the inability ascribed to man in the Bible does not imply any natural impotency to spiritual obedience. But the language of the Bible is stronger, and more unqualified, than that of the Reformers, being limited and explained only by the known attributes of the subject; whereas the language of the Reformers is, at times, specific and precise, confining the impotency of man exclusively to the will — fairly implying only a moral, and not a natural inability. And when we consider that, in all their controversies, the free agency and natural ability of man were expressly admitted on both sides, and the sole point of debate was the moral condition of the will — as free from bias or under bias to evil — by what authority shall we metamorphose an alleged *moral impotency* into a *natural impossibility*,— and that at the expense, also, of making the greatest and best men contradict themselves? Doubtless, the impression often made by their language has been that of natural impotency; and, in modern days, there may be those who have not understood the language of the Reformers or the Bible on this subject, and who verily believe

nan has no ability, of any kind or de-
; which is spiritually good, and that the
nand and to punish survive the wreck
subjects of all the elements of accounta-
ere be such in the church, we have only
r the time, they ought to be teachers,
some one should teach them which be the
oracles of God. It must be admitted,
the primitive age down to the time of
ie subject with clearness, or treated it
n and consistency. His appears to have
st rose above the mists which hung over
saw, and developed, and fixed immuta-
great outlines. And, like the law of
ar system, it reduced every conflicting
o order; and brought out from clouds
racter of God; and armed the Gospel, in
on from that day to this, with a power
t passed from the lips of inspired men,
the ministry of the uninspired. In his
ie taught and proved the natural capacity
nt and commensurate with divine require-
on to perform impossibilities cannot be
inability of man to obey the Gospel con-
ly in a voluntary opposing inclination or
nore inflexible it is, and the more certain
en up without special grace, the more
is and deserving of punishment. Hence,
ce constitutes no apology for sinning, or
ing to sin, he taught and practised the
sinners to render evangelical obedience
r they would hear or whether they would

forbear,—repelling the plea of inability, and tearing away excuses, and, by the authority of God, and the hopes of heaven, and the fears of hell, urging them to immediate submission. From him, through Bellamy, and Witherspoon, and Hopkins, and Smalley, and West, and Strong, and Dwight, and our seminaries, this doctrine of man's natural ability and obligation as a free agent to perform evangelical duties, and his inexcusable moral impotency or aversion, increasing in guilt with its increasing power, have become the received doctrines of the New England churches; and the preaching of immediate repentance and faith, as growing out of them, has been the practical course in the great and repeated and augmenting revivals of our land.

OBJECTION 7. But it is said, "This doctrine of man's free agency and natural ability to obey the Gospel sets aside the doctrine of the special influence of the Spirit in regeneration; for if man is of himself able to repent and believe, there is no necessity for the interposition of the Holy Spirit.

ANSWER. If the doctrine of free agency and natural ability does set aside the necessity of a special divine influence in regeneration, it cannot be true; for if there is a doctrine of the Bible which is unquestionable and fundamental, it is that of fallen man's dependence for actual holiness on the special influence of the Spirit; and if there be a fact which every man who is saved learns experimentally, it is the certainty of his perdition, if Christ by his Spirit does not subdue his will, and reconcile him to God.

But is it true that, if man, as a free agent, is able to obey the Gospel, he needs no influence of the Spirit to secure his actual obedience? Is ability to obey evidence of the certainty of obedience? Do free agents perform always all the duties of which they are capable? Is there no possible way

for man to be dependent on the Holy Spirit for obedience, but such a constitution of mind as renders obedience a natural impossibility? May not alienated subjects be voluntary in their rebellion, and at the same time so obstinate and fully set therein, that if God by his Spirit does not overcome their opposition, they will persist in it forever? The inference is as illogical as it is unscriptural, that ability to obey the Gospel implies any such certainty of obedience as supersedes the necessity of the Holy Spirit.

I am aware that many good men have been exceedingly jealous for God on this subject, supposing that they augment the evil of sin, and the justice and the mercy and the power of God, in exact proportion as they throw down the sinner into a condition of natural and absolute impotency. But, while I appreciate their motives, I cannot perceive the wisdom of their views. What possible foil to set off the evil of sin does natural impotency possess? One would think that a subject of God's glorious government, who can, but will not, obey him, might appear to himself and to the universe much more accountable, and much more guilty, in the day of judgment, than one whose capacity of obedience had been wholly annihilated by the sin of Adam. Does it illustrate the glory of God's justice more to punish the helpless and impotent, than to punish the voluntary but incorrigible? Is there a greater display of mercy in delivering a sinner from the *calamity of a ruined constitution* which makes obedience a natural impossibility, than in delivering him from a perverseness of will which despises the riches of the goodness of God, and renders his condemnation as inevitable as it is just? What is the view which will press on the reminiscence of the blessed in glory, and perpetuate the praises of heaven? Will it be a natural impossibility removed, or

incorrigible obstinacy overcome? As to the power of God displayed in regeneration, no doubt it is "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." But which is the greatest display of power, to change the natural constitution of the mind, or to reclaim the otherwise indomitable will of a rebel to loyalty and love? Men may obliterate natural affection, and form habits adverse to their natural constitution; and if it were only some material or intellectual defect to be supplied, or obstacle to be overcome, or some taste or instinct to be changed, it might seem a small thing for God to rectify the difficulty. He who could blot out and light up in a moment all the material orbs of the universe, with their apparatus and intelligent inhabitants, and who is continually creating and ushering into being minds around us, might seem to find but small occasion to display the exceeding greatness of his power, in the rectification of some constitutional defect. But when a mind, armed with such terrific power of accountable action as may bear justly the responsibilities imposed by God's eternal government, becomes so alienated, and fully set on evil, as to baffle the regular influence of law and Gospel, this creates an obstacle to the reclaiming of that mind vast and momentous; and furnishes occasion, probably, for the greatest display of omnipotence ever to be witnessed by the universe.

The question, then, which awakens the fears of some good men, is not, as they suppose, the question whether man is actually dependent on the special influence of the Holy Spirit for regeneration; but what is the nature, what the cause, ground or reason, of that dependence? Is it a dependence created by a natural impossibility, or by the inflexible, volun-

tary, unreasonable opposition of a free agent to the perfect character and glorious government of God? From the time of Edwards, the latter has been, and now is, the received doctrine of the ministers and churches of New England. And yet — plain as this subject would seem to be, and for more than half a century settled — still it is objected; —

OBJECTION 8. That "this doctrine of man's free agency and ability is but a new edition of the exploded Arminian notion of the self-determining power, and conversion by moral suasion."

ANSWER. We have seen that the Bible teaches the free agency and natural ability of man; that the primitive fathers, and Augustine, and Luther, and Calvin, and Edwards, and Bellamy, and Witherspoon, and Smalley, and West, and Strong, and Dwight, all recognize the capacity and obligation of man, as a free agent; and place his impotency exclusively in the perversity of his will. And is this Arminianism and the self-determining power? What is the self-determining power? It is a theory devised to escape from the certainty of human action, as implied in the government of God according to the counsel of his own will. To accomplish this, it was insisted that all voluntary action of mind, in order to be praise or blame worthy, must be uncertain, and occasioned by no influence whatever, *ab extra;* but the soul, shut up *in vacuo*, must put forth volitions, without any cause, ground, or reason, but its own internal sovereign good pleasure; and that even choice itself was good for nothing, which was not the product of an antecedent choice; so that every human volition must be impregnated with virtue by an antecedent choice, and all acts of mind by one act of choice before the first. This is the old Arminian notion of the self-deter-

mining power. And is it like? Like what? Like the capacity of acting in the view of motives, in accordance with the righteous requisitions of heaven?

Ask Edwards, and he will reply,—that the impossibility of choosing right would preclude obligation and guilt; and that if all which his antagonist meant by self-determining power was merely the capacity of choice in accordance with divine requirement, there could be no dispute on the subject. He held that it was only a moral inability, only the opposition of a contrary choice, which prevented a right choice in all cases.

OBJECTION 9. It is objected that, "this doctrine of man's ability to obey the Gospel, and his dependence only as a sinner, if it be not Arminianism, is tending fast that way, and may be expected ultimately to eventuate in the overthrow of evangelical doctrine and revivals, and in cold Arminian formality, or a subtle and virulent heresy."

ANSWER. But these tendencies, hitherto, have been so slow in coming into being, as might well allay our fears for many generations, if not forever. From Augustine to Edwards, and from Edwards to this day, the ability of man, as a free agent, has been taught, and his impotency, as consisting in a biased and perverted will: and from making the distinction clear and prominent, Arminianism has never been the result; but has resulted, as history will attest, from confounding this distinction, and sinking down man to the impotency of a natural impossibility of spiritual obedience. There are two ways of producing Arminianism; one is by teaching it, and another, more effectual, is the incorporating with the truth the revolting material of natural inability. The river whose channel is obstructed will send out its waters in lateral channels of desolation. Remove the obstructions, and the

return gladly to their natural course.
way to promote Arminianism is to
of common sense and of revelation by
ral impotency; while well-defined and
of *natural ability* as the foundation of
ral inability as consisting in obstinate
al obedience, are the most effectual means
Christendom.

Neander, and of Pusey, Professor of
versity of Oxford, England, concerning
eat German defection, speaks volumes
t is a problem," says Professor Pusey,
and importance to solve, how Germany,
appearance at least, sound, became, by
l to a fearful extent, an unbelieving
led, when Neander, on my asking him
ne progress of unbelief in Germany, said,
y.' I was much prejudiced at first
but came at last to no other result." *
oxy of Germany included and was per-
ne of man's natural inability to obey the

sed by our friends at a distance that the
New England from orthodoxy was occa-
divinity, particularly the doctrine of
oral inability,—which was denominated
y years ago, in opposition to what was
Calvinism." But the fact is, that in
usetts, as in Germany, the Arminian and
was the legitimate and undeniable pro-

* al Repository for 1832, p. 586.

duct of "dead orthodoxy." So far as the Calvinistic system, as expounded by Edwards and the disciples of his school, prevailed, revivals prevailed, and heresy was kept back. To its proud waves they presented a barrier immovable as our iron-bound shores; while Calvinism, having degenerated to natural impotency, opened the breach through which the flood of the Arminian and Unitarian heresy came in. Over nearly the whole territory where prejudice reigned against the doctrines of Edwards and the revivals of his day — though his opponents were nominally Calvinistic — has the desolation of heresy rolled. And, most notoriously, it was "dead orthodoxy" that opened the dikes and let in this flood; and equally notorious is the fact, that it is Edwardsean Evangelism which is turning back this flood, and filling the channels from which it is retreating with the waters of life. The more minutely the religious statistics of New England are examined, the more unquestionable will the historic verity of these statements appear.

It is also a fact which stands out to observation, that Arminian proselytism, and Unitarian and Universalist heresy, and infidel fatality, find the easiest access to, and make the most havoc in communities, in proportion as the ultra Calvinism of natural inability is more plainly and frequently inculcated, and more unequivocally understood by the people. And far the greater proportion of the revivals of our land, it is well known, have come to pass under the auspices of Calvinism as modified by Edwards and the disciples of his school, and under the inculcation of ability and obligation, and urgent exhortations to immediate repentance and submission to God: while congregations and regions over which natural impotency and dependence, and the impenitent use of means, and waiting God's time, have disclosed their tend-

ed, like Egypt, dark, beside the land of
the mountains of Gilboa, on which there
lds of offerings; and like the bones in the
d, dry, very dry. Far be it from me to
at no ministers are blessed with revivals
he doctrine of man's natural ability and
. mean, that where the doctrine of abso-
de to stand out in all its relations, and
any counteracting truths, its results, so
on has extended, are, without a single ex-
r to the cause of Christ, and the souls of
a general fact, the Gospel as explained
he principles of ability and obligation, is
l eminently, than in any other mode of
wer of God and the wisdom of God unto

advocate the doctrine of man's ability as
dependence on special grace as a sinner,
cement of my ministry to this day I have
m far from supposing that the doctrine is
ion, or that there is no danger that ardent
minds may give to ability and obligation
ependence on the special influence of the
minence. Nor are the fears and cautions
ve revivals, and have experimental knowl-
to be lightly regarded. But the danger
e of insisting upon ability and obligation
by denying the doctrine. This would be
n to prevent the occasional over-action of
nilate the attraction of gravity to avoid the
hich it is the occasion. Nor is the excess
of free agency and ability to be equalized

by pressing with equal frequency and exclusiveness by others the doctrine of dependence. Both doctrines are true, and exist in perfect harmony; and, by their united action, bring on the mind a strength of obligation, and weight of guilt, and a power of motive, wholly unparalleled by any other mode of exhibiting the Gospel which I have ever known. It has been said that they ought never to be preached together in the same sermon. It would be nearer the truth to say that they ought never to be separated. Should free agency and ability be so preached as to make and justify the impression that man is so able and so willing to obey the Gospel as that the special influence of the Spirit is not necessary to make him actually willing, it would be a doctrine fundamentally erroneous; and were dependence so preached as to make and justify the impression that God requires of men the performance of natural impossibilities, and that all which a sinner *can* do is impenitently to use the means and wait for sovereign grace; — this would be the subversion of accountability, and of all the principles of the moral government of God. It is when the capacity of man for obedience is asserted, and his own perversion of it is charged upon him, and God commands him to repent, and Christ, who died for him, exhorts, and his ambassadors plead, and the Spirit strives; that the commandment comes, and fear is awakened, and conscience armed, and sin revives, and the sinner dies. Experience evinces continually, in revivals, that there is no pressure upon the soul like that which is produced by the recognition of ability self-perverted, and the necessity of special divine influence self-created, by inflexible obstinacy in sin. If there be any truth which ever brought this soul of mine into the dust before God, with a conscious guilt which was insupportable, and an anguish the recollection of which the ages of eternity cannot

he testimony introduced by Dr. Beecher
ting of Presbytery, namely, his own sermon,
he same by Dr. Green.
a of testimony being resumed;
ted that he had no further testimony on the
l.
RY was examined, and his testimony is as

n the Synod, when Dr. Beecher gave his
cts are substantially as given by Judge
to the best of my recollection.
being now closed, it was moved that the

ted that he was much exhausted, and re-
ment.
ave notice that he might have occasion to
estimony, should he be able to procure it,
o the defence.
took up other business before them, and
judicatory until the hour of adjournment.
adjourned.

THURSDAY MORNING.

and was opened with prayer.
ny was introduced on the part of Dr.

. that he wished to apprize the Presbytery
must arise from their having rejected the
been desirous of laying before them, and
l in a letter not permitted to be read. If
ould not terminate according to the views

its universal inculcation and adoption. And most blessed and glorious, I am confident, will be the result, when her ministry, everywhere, shall rightly understand and teach, and their hearers universally shall admit, that the full ability of every sinner to comply with the terms of salvation, and the voluntary and obstinate perversion of this ability, together constitute the ground of the indispensableness of converting grace. So preached Apostles and Reformers and other successful ambassadors for Christ; and so was their message received by the multitudes in whom it was made the power of God unto salvation. And so will ministers universally preach, and their message be received, when all kindreds, and people, and tongues, shall be subdued to the obedience of faith.

ERMON II.

TIVE CHARACTER OF MAN.

: loveth is born of God."—1 JOHN 4 : 7.

ken of is holy love, which assimilates the
s that love which is styled the fulfilling
. is the principle of evangelical obedience.
ry one that loveth knoweth God. But
ternal — is religion. This love does not
ure. It is never a quality of his heart as
birth, but is the result, in all cases, of a
sition. "Which were born, not of blood,
e flesh, nor of the will of man, but of

ct of this discourse to show that man is
ire. By religion I mean supreme love
I mean the entire race. And by the
is not religious by nature, I mean that
him which is religion, and nothing of
natural effect or consequence, without a
osition. When natural objects produce
mly, we suppose there is in them some
lts, which we call their nature; and if
ts which they never produce, we say that
ire to produce them.

ed, therefore, of man, that he is not

religious by nature, we mean that there is nothing in his constitution of mind or body of which religion is the result without a special divine interposition, and that the *first accountable character* which he sustains is not a religious character. It will not be denied, that if religion exists at all in man it must exist in his heart, and must consist primarily in the state of his will and affections towards God,—must include a predominant benevolence for God, and complacency in his character, and delight in his law, and obedience to his Gospel, and resignation to his will.

In view of these explanations, therefore, I observe,

I. THAT THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF EVERY MAN IN VIEW OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL, IS EVIDENCE TO HIMSELF THAT HE POSSESSES NO RELIGION.

I appeal to the experience of every one in this assembly that has not been born again, whether religious affections have found a place in your heart, from your earliest recollection. Do you believe that you are truly pious? Can you lay your hand upon your heart, and look up to heaven and say, Thou knowest that I love thee more than all things beside? Do you love his word, his worship, his people? Do you maintain, with pleasure, secret prayer? Are you meek under provocation, and self-denying in temptation, and resigned in affliction? This is religion. But is this the experience of any one in this assembly who has no reason to believe that he is born of God? And if not, certainly you are not religious by nature. And if you present this outline of religious experience to your neighbor, you will find that he has nothing that answers to it. And if you extend the inquiry through the world, you will not find one whose first development of character is that of religion.

II. THE UNIFORM EXPERIENCE OF AWAKENED SINNERS

CORROBORATES THE SAME DOCTRINE. From the day of Pentecost to the present hour, multitudes have experienced deep anxiety for their souls, but universally the cause of it has been that they had no religion. They have perceived, always, that the law of God required of them a love which they did not feel, and Christian graces to which they were strangers. And nothing has been found more to aggravate their distress than the simple direction to love supremely the Lord their God, and Jesus Christ. Uniformly the reply has been, We cannot love; we cannot repent; we cannot believe. I am sensible that there are many who are not thus awakened; but does their stupidity discredit the consciousness of those who are awakened in respect to their own character? This consciousness, then, of all who are awakened, that they have no religion, is strong presumptive evidence that the same is the fact with respect to those who are not awakened.

III. TO THIS MAY BE ADDED THE TESTIMONY OF THOSE WHO FURNISH EVIDENCE OF PIETY. Their uniform testimony is that their religious experience is a state of the will and affections wholly unknown before.

It is not to be denied that some persons profess religion who disclaim the existence of any great change in the state of their will and affections towards God, and claim that they have always, from their earliest years, loved God. But it must be remembered that the religion which they claim is not such religion as has been described. To this they make no pretension, but ridicule it as visionary, enthusiastic and fanatical. Doubtless men may have such religion as these persons profess, without a change of heart. But I insist that the outline of religious experience which has been given is the religion of the Bible; and that all who are conscious of possessing it do testify that it is a state of the affections entirely

was suspected of Perfectionism, until you heard it from Dr. Wilson's charges?

Ans.—I never heard, until yesterday, that Dr. Beecher was charged or suspected of Perfectionism. [Read, &c.]

Dr. WILSON then addressed the court as follows:

Moderator: The important and blessed ends of Church government and discipline can only be attained by a wise and faithful administration. In the hand of Church officers the Lord Jesus Christ has placed the government of his kingdom on earth; and I can conceive of no station more responsible than that occupied by those officers to whom are committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven;—to open that kingdom to the penitent; to shut it against the impenitent; to vindicate the truth and the honor of Christ; to purge out that unholy leaven of error which might infect the whole lump; to deter men from the commission of offences, and prevent the wrath of God from falling on the church.*

It belongs to the officers of the kingdom of our Lord, when solemnly convened as a court of Christ, ministerially and authoritatively to determine not only cases of conscience and matters of practice, but to decide controversies of faith; and their decisions, if consonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission.†

Of all the subjects brought before a Church court for adjudication, none are so important as controversies of faith, and none so difficult to determine. None so important, because truth is essential to purity, peace, and goodness; and no crime, of a pardonable nature, is so great as that of corrupting the word of God, so as to preach another Gospel. No adjudications are more difficult, because, under the ap-

* *Confession of Faith*, ch. xxx. p. 129. † Ibid. p. 132.

pearance of piety, zeal, and liberality, — by popular talent and the arts of persuasion, by the concealing of the poison of asps under the pure milk and meat of some salutary truths, and by an appeal to numbers and wealth and success,— false teachers, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect.* The whole history of the Church proves that no crime ever committed has been so complicated, so hard to be detected, so difficult of eradication, so hurtful to the Church, so ruinous to the world, as the preaching of another gospel. And, Sir, no class of men has ever possessed more talent, manifested more zeal, exhibited more perseverance, or exerted greater numerical and pecuniary power, or gained a more elevated popular applause, than some false teachers. And this, we have reason to believe. will continue to be the case till "the day of the Lord cometh that shall burn as an oven," till "the sons of Levi shall be purified," "the sanctuary of God cleansed," and "the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." Were it necessary, before an enlightened court of Christ, to support these statements by proof and illustration, I might cite to you the state of the Church in the time of Jeroboam, in the days of Ahab, and the period which elapsed between the reign of Josiah and the eleventh year of Zedekiah. I might remind you of those who compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, in the time of Christ; of those who called the apostles and elders from their fields of labor to determine a controversy about doctrine, commenced at Antioch and adjudicated at Jerusalem. I might tell the long and melancholy stories of Arius, Pelagius, Socinus, and

* Matthew 24 : 24.

Presbyterian Church. These
the assumption that the ancie
ever been regarded by New England di
in fact, the true one. But about the
West this was called in question by
exposition given to the terms of the
difficulties I had always felt, and corre
I adopted on my trial.

To make the matter plain, it is enou
on comparing the statements which I ha
68, concerning the creeds of the Refor
concerning them in my subsequent trial
appear to be an inconsistency betwee
ever, in fact, no inconsistency. The
change just mentioned in the interpre
Faith, and of the creeds of the Reforma
illustrate this, we need only to refer to
facts.

For many years the Edwardean divine
the Confession of Faith as teaching the
his posterity, and their guilt and expo
act, in its strict sense, and according to
import of the language used. It was al
absolute and natural inability of sinne
demanded of them by God. To these
doctrine of a limited atonement, and of a
such limitation. Not only did the New
that these doctrines were taught in the Co
old school Presbyterians of the Middle S
On this ground they were assailed by Wh
Nor in reply did they ever intimate that
doctrines which he assailed as the true sen
Faith. It v r.

not of peace and good-will to men. If men were religious by nature, we might expect that the knowledge and worship of the true God would be in every age universal. Instead of this, two-thirds of the human family have been idolaters. Notwithstanding the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead,— and notwithstanding all that God has done by revelation, and by miracle, and by his Spirit,— two-thirds of the human family have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things. Why is this? The evidence of His being is not obscure, and the divinity of idols is not supported by even specious evidence. The service of God is reasonable, pure, and benign; while that of idols is obscene, expensive, and bloody. Could a race, of which every individual commenced his accountable course under the influence of religion, have done thus?

V. It is the uniform testimony of the Bible, that men are not religious by nature.

This is strongly implied in the utter silence of the Scriptures in respect to the piety of man by nature. If the first character which man sustains is a religious character, the Scriptures could not have failed to recognize it. It would be a commanding fact, which would extend its implications through every page, and modify every doctrine. Surely the descriptions of a religious, and of an alienated world, could not be the same. But let one examine, one by one, all the passages which speak of the heart of man, and he will find there is not *one* which declares, or implies, that it is the subject of religion by nature. Whence this silence? It is one great object of the Bible to make man acquainted with his own heart; and much is disclosed concerning its wickedness.

Why is nothing said of its excellence, if religion be one of its native attributes? This silence, though only negative testimony, corroborates greatly the preceding evidence, that man is not religious by nature.

VI. THE BIBLE ASCRIBES TO THE NATURAL HEART OF MAN A CHARACTER UTTERLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE EXISTENCE OF RELIGION. Before the flood, every imagination of *man's heart* is described as being *evil only, continually;* and after that event, *as evil still,* from his youth. This last declaration is made also as a reason why God in all future ages will no more curse the ground for man's sake,—affording testimony, not only that the heart of man was evil then from his youth, but that it would continue to be so through all ages future; unreclaimed by judgments, however numerous or severe. Thirteen hundred years later the hearts of the sons of men are described as "full of evil." And later still as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The account which is given of the heart by our Saviour is as explicit and forcible as any of the preceding,—"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, blasphemies."

Upon this testimony of the Bible I remark, that the heart of man is never described as becoming thus wicked by any change *from native goodness to evil, since the fall of Adam;* but, when described as evangelically good, it is always done in terms which imply a change from *evil* to *goodness.*

Whenever men conduct wickedly, they are regarded as illustrating their own natural character,—as obeying the dictates of their own hearts. But when they manifest religious affections, these are described as the fruits of the Spirit; *and when they* are given up to irreclaimable wickedness, they

are given up to their own hearts' lust,—to their foolish and darkened hearts,—to vile affections through the lust of their own hearts, after their hard and impenitent hearts, treasuring up wrath. How, then, stands the testimony of the Bible concerning the heart of man? It is silent as to the existence in it of religion. That heart is described in terms which preclude its existence. That heart is never represented as becoming bad by the loss of religion, or as being good except as the effect of a divine interposition; and when abandoned to itself, it is always represented as being desperately wicked. Will it be alleged that this testimony is ancient, and that the heart of man may have changed for the better? To break the force of the testimony, it must not only be *possible* that a change *may* have taken place, but it must be proved that it *actually has taken place.* Can such proof be found in the Bible? Is there a passage which asserts or implies that a universal change has taken place in the heart of man since the preceding descriptions of it were placed upon record?

Will it be alleged that Enoch, and Noah, and Moses, and Abraham, and others, are spoken of as righteous, without any *mention* that they had experienced a change of heart? If it were so, it would not prove that no change had been experienced. The omission, in the record, to recognize the change, does not prove that it never happened. But it is implied of all these that they did experience a change of character. Faith implies a change of character, and is the gift of God. But by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and this was a faith that works by love. By faith, Enoch walked with God. By faith, Abraham offered his son. By faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Will it be said that the preceding proof is *contained in a few* detached texts of Scripture?

These texts are the testimony of God. They relate to the subject in question, and are direct and explicit. They are not detached from the context, and made to speak a meaning which they would not be authorized to speak in their connection. And as to their being detached in any other sense, what if they were all contained on one page,—would that increase their perspicuity? Or what if they were multiplied an hundred-fold,—would that increase the evidence of divine testimony? How near together must the declarations of God be placed, and how often must they be repeated, to be entitled to credit? And what is the character of those to whom the Lord speaketh once, yea, twice, and they regard it not?

VII. THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH IMPLIES THAT MANKIND ARE NOT RELIGIOUS BY NATURE. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." "Childhood and youth are vanity." "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child." "The wicked are estranged from the womb."

Could all this be said of childhood and youth, if the first accountable character they sustain were a religious character? Is every imagination of the pious, evil? Is religion vanity, or folly, or estrangement from God? It must be remembered also that the preceding are not specific descriptions of *some* children and youth, but descriptions of the entire race of man in the early periods of life.

VIII. THE GENERIC DESCRIPTIONS OF MAN, CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE, ARE SUCH AS PRECLUDE THE SUPPOSITION THAT HE IS RELIGIOUS BY NATURE.

The term *man* includes all men of all nations. One nation is not man. All nations but one, are not man. Every individual of the race is included; and whatever is declared of the genus is declared concerning every individual. In the

for years? Whence came that labored effort, a few
a new creed or confession of faith for the state? who
General Association, or advised to that measure, to
m of many minds, if, as Dr. Beecher supposes, we are
n every one of the doctrines of the Bible? Again, Dr.
t that we might so live as to leave the church in a
which the generation to come might not live to see
what, I ask, has prevented the blaze of controversy,
ut the forbearance of those who, though assailed on
m to make almost any sacrifice for peace? And what
of controversy, that many generations will not see
those who adhere to the faith of their fathers are
ves, and what they esteem the truth, trampled in the
ner view the subject on all sides. But he has at
very that there is a great difference, in "the eye of
man, and in our own eye, on a death-bed, and on
between the appearance of a great pacification, or a
hieved by our instrumentality." He is certainly to
is discovery, and had he made it ten years ago the
ld not have been witnessed. But it is matter of joy
been made, and it is devoutly to be hoped the effects
Let Dr. Beecher, then, use his influence to remove
irritation and suspicion. Let us have men at the
l Seminary in whom all the churches and ministers
hus give us back, as an united community, our
Spectator, our candidates for the ministry, our
ur harmonious associations, our united churches.
done, let not Dr. Beecher, or any other man, sup-
n community will always be amused with mere
se of truth will be sacrificed to the interests or
pp. 32, 33.

is derived from the letters recently published by
is. These letters contain some pathetic remarks on
d the evils of alienation. But these remarks from
ate in the day, and they imply an incorrect view
nply that the divisions and alienations are occa-
of Dr. Taylor, whereas they are chargeable wholly
lf. It is presumed that some transactions, which
are not now present to Dr. Beecher's recollection.

ignorant of God; as alienated from God; as opposed to Jesus Christ, and his cause and people; as lying in wickedness; as dead in trespasses and sins. Is this the description of a race whose first accountable character is that of loyalty to God?

The term *flesh* is also a generic term, descriptive of man in his native state. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that (or because) he also is *flesh*." His being an animal furnished no reason, surely, why the Spirit of God should not strive with him. It is his moral nature, therefore, which is called flesh; and which is described in other places as alienated from God, and as lusting against the Spirit; furnishing an obvious reason why the Spirit might abandon man. In his discourse with Nicodemus, our Saviour speaks of the *flesh* as being that *moral* nature of man which is the consequence of his natural birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Our Saviour would not surely undertake to convince Nicodemus that the animal body is flesh. Flesh and spirit are therefore moral qualities contrasted: the one, forming the first character of man; the other, the result of a special interposition of the divine Spirit. The one disqualifying, and the other fitting, a man for the kingdom of heaven. The one, intending that moral nature of man which renders regeneration indispensable; the other, that holy nature which is produced by the Spirit of God, when he renews the heart.

The flesh is in other places described as the comprehensive principle of moral evil in man; as the Spirit is described as being the efficient cause of all good. The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, idolatry, hatred, seditions, heresies, *envyings, murders*, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: *but the fruits of the* Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering,

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is, that it abundantly inculcates human activity and ability in the affair of salvation; even professing to resuscitate them from the dead, alleging that we have heretofore killed and buried them. Holding that sinners, though depraved, have *power* to convert themselves, it proposes the minute and direct *steps* by which they may effect it, content with a general allusion, now and then, to the necessity of a Divine influence to aid and persuade them. — pp. 5, 6.

Apparently induced by their wish to present the ability and obligation of sinners in the strongest light, and to convert them as fast as possible by every means, the preachers in question have renewed the attempt which has been a thousand times baffled before, — an attempt to make the humbling doctrines of the Gospel plain and acceptable to the carnal mind. Original sin is explained away. Adult depravity is resolved into a *habit* of sinning, and the various ruling passions; while the deep, fixed, inherent aversion of the soul to God and all holiness is kept out of sight. Election, the sovereignty of God, the special influence of the Spirit in renovating the heart, are so explained that the "natural man" can understand them, and be reconciled to them besides.

Yourself and the public will expect to know my *reasons* for regarding you as connected with the New Haven school, and a leading advocate of their theology. I will now attempt to give them.

1. *Your preaching, together with your treatment of inquirers and converts.* And, when I speak of this character of your sermons and addresses, I do not intend an occasional sentence or expression; but the prevailing tone of sentiment, on frequent occasions, among your own people, to other congregations in the city, and at numerous opportunities abroad.

I cannot, however, refer to chapter and verse, or quote your language verbatim. You have seldom put your new theology to the press, though you have published much on various topics. Whether the omission has been by design, or for imperative reasons, I know not. I must, therefore, resort to other sources of evidence. And I here premise that I do not affirm what you *have* preached, but what you have been *understood* to preach; for the words of the oral preacher pass into the air, and cannot be remembered with perfect accuracy, and repeated with confidence. I only mean to say, that in New England the impression is strong and deep that you have fully preached among us the theology above described; that, while Dr. Taylor and others have written, and reasoned, and philosophized, and mysticised, you have rendered the same system palpable and practical *in your preaching* and ministrations, subserving their cause far more effectually than they have done themselves. — pp. 8, 9.

Dr. WILSON said he had marked other passages with the intent to read them, but would spare the time of the court, and lay the book on the table for reference.

Now, he wished the Presbytery to recollect the object for which he had introduced and read these printed documents; it was to show that whatever amount of capital Dr. Beecher might have attained, within the last ten years, it had been diminished, in no inconsiderable degree, before he had taken up his line of march for the West; and, therefore, the loss was not chargeable to the opposition of Dr. Wilson. But, suppose all this proof be laid wholly out of view, and suppose that Dr. Beecher is still in possession of the entire amount of fame which can be the result of a long life devoted to the promotion of what he believed the cause of truth and benevolence, was this to be pleaded in his favor here? Was he to be more exempt from the judgment of his peers than the humblest individual in society? Dr. Wilson would say to the court, on this subject, "Look not upon his countenance, nor upon the height of his intellectual stature." You are to "know no man after the flesh." His talents, fame, and even his usefulness, ought not to be remembered, when you cast your eye upon the charges now before you. The inquiries submitted to you are plain and important. Has he published and preached prominent and radical errors? What methods has he taken to propagate and render them popular in the Presbyterian Church?

3. A third obstacle, said Dr. Wilson, presented in the way of a just decision in this case, is Dr. Greene's review of Dr. Beecher's sermon on "The Faith once delivered to the Saints." Extracts from this review were read before this court at its last meeting to prove — what? — to prove that if the specifications made under these charges be all true, they

form no proper ground of complaint! Now, I should not have referred to this sermon, or to Dr. Greene's review of it, had they not been brought before you by Dr. Beecher himself. I confess that all my knowledge of the sermon is from the author's own statement, from Dr. Greene's review of it, and from the review in the *Christian Examiner*, together with Dr. Beecher's answer in the *Christian Spectator*. Thus, I get a knowledge of sermons I never read. But I would ask, Is Dr. Greene to be quoted as good authority against the standards of the Presbyterian Church? Dr. Greene, it is said, pronounced Dr. Beecher a Calvinist. Permit me, Sir, to disabuse your minds on this subject. Dr. Beecher did not call his own sentiments Calvinistic. He called his sermon "a select system"—held by no man nor denomination, so as to render it proper to call it by the name of any man or any sect; and he says that some of almost every denomination hold it, and some reject it. Dr. Greene gives the same account of Dr. Beecher's "select system." He says that Calvinists, in the most proper sense of the term, would except to some of the articles of this system; and a great many who would by no means consent to be denominated Calvinists would only consider Dr. Beecher as holding the evangelical system *substantially*. Well, indeed, did Dr. Greene say that strict and proper Calvinists would except to some of Dr. Beecher's articles of faith. Look, Sir, at the following:—"Men are in the possession of such faculties, and placed in such circumstances, as render it practicable for them to do whatever God requires." This is an article in Dr. Beecher's "select system" to which no true Calvinist, and but few Arminians, can subscribe; for, while it directly contradicts the Calvinistic creed on the one hand, on the other it asserts an *ility in fallen* man which intelligent Arminians deny. In-

an can assert such an ability in fallen man,
a he make it the foundation of divine govern-
being deeply imbued with the Pelagian heresy,
splay of his entire ignorance of the true doc-
ll.

to the Atonement, Dr. Beecher states that
a the influence of his law, and forgive sin, on
epentance toward God, and faith in our Lord
d, that a compliance with these conditions is
e regular exercise of the powers and faculties
s an accountable creature. [See Christian
., pp. 31, 32.] Every man who understands
roversy knows that these are precisely the
nitarians. Did Dr. Greene say that Dr.
alvinist? No. What Dr. Greene attempts
Dr. Beecher's "select system" contains
ich no strict Calvinist, no strict Arminian,
d this is precisely what Dr. Beecher himself
elect system. His words are these: "It is
which some of almost every denomination
ject." And he calls it evangelical, to pre-
n. Now, I claim the right of calling this
by a more appropriate name. And, as Dr.
ely anxious to be considered a Calvinist, I
ct system *Liberal Calvinism;* and I will
ge of Dr. Greene, and say, "the peculiar
class of Calvinists to which Dr. Beecher
apparent in other parts of this discourse."
ral Calvinism? According to Huntington
Huntington of London, nor Huntington in
in the Old South church; but Huntington
inism Improved), in his book, entitled Cal-

vinism Improved; liberal Calvinism is Universal Salvation. According to Dr. Taylor and Professor Fitch; liberal Calvinism is the adoption of a Calvinistic creed "for substance of doctrine," admitting the primary propositions, and rejecting the secondary as unwarranted and obsolete explanations. According to others, liberal Calvinism is the stepping-stone to Pelagian perfection. In my opinion, liberal Calvinism is that select system now called in the Presbyterian Church New-Schoolism. What did liberal Calvinism do in Scotland? It produced the moderate party, against which Dr. Witherspoon wrote his celebrated "Characteristics." What did liberal Calvinism do in England? It placed a Unitarian in the very pulpit once occupied by the venerable Matthew Henry. What did liberal Calvinism do in Geneva? It placed a Neologian in the very seat of Calvin. What has liberal Calvinism done in America? It has undermined and almost annihilated the Saybrook Platform in New England; it has divided, distracted, and almost ruined, the Presbyterian Church, under the care of the General Assembly; it has exalted unto high places men whose talents and opinions are inimical to the dearest interests of truth; it has palmed upon the East and West and South such talented and liberal spirits as Duncan, and Flint, and Clapp! And does Dr. Beecher consider it applause to be called a liberal Calvinist? Yes, Sir; in this he glories. And, in language which cannot be mistaken, he declares that nothing has done more to eclipse the Sun of Righteousness than "old dead orthodoxy." He tells you that, as a Congregationalist in New England, his creed was the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and the Saybrook Platform; as a Presbyterian, his creed is our Confession of Faith; at the same time, he declares that there is nothing in charges, on the subject of erroneous doctrine, but what

he has preached and published, from ten to twenty years, in his "select system," which some of all sorts believe, and some of all sorts reject. And what does he desire you to infer from all this? That his sentiments are in accordance with the standards of the church, at least, "for substance of doctrine;" or, if there be "shades of difference," they have been so long, so perseveringly and extensively propagated, that there is now no just cause of complaint; as if, when a man is arraigned for sapping the foundation of civil society, and introducing misrule in all the states, he should plead in bar of the prosecution, or in mitigation of his offence, that, as he had been engaged in the project of a select system from ten to twenty years, no one now had any right to complain! But, suppose Dr. Greene, in 1824, delighted with the ability with which Dr. Beecher defended or sustained the doctrine of the Trinity, had, in kindness and courtesy, overlooked the errors of the "select system," and pronounced Dr. Beecher a Calvinist in so many words; what weight ought such a declaration to have with you, on a trial held eleven years afterwards? It ought, Sir, to be with you less than the dust of the balance. Could Dr. Greene possibly have foreseen what evils would result from this "select system" in ten years? And can any man now see the amount of mischief which this "select system" will produce in ten years more, if the desolating tide is not rolled back?

4. A fourth obstacle in the way of a just decision is the claim that is set up on the subject of interpretation. Let us see what this claim of interpretation is. I quote from Dr. Beecher's work, entitled "The Causes and Remedy of Scepticism."—Vide vol. I. page 65.

With these remarks in view, I proceed to observe that the creeds of the Reformation are also made often the occasion of perplexity and doubt to

inexperienced minds. * * They were constructed amidst the most arduous controversy that ever taxed the energies of man, and with the eye fixed upon the errors of the day, and on the points around which the battle chiefly raged. On some topics they are more full than the proportion of the faith now demands; some of their phraseology also, once familiar, would now, without explanation, inculcate sentiments which are not Scriptural, which the framers did not believe, and the creeds were never intended to teach. * * *

Of course, they appear rather as insulated, independent, abstract propositions, than as the symmetrical parts and proportions of a beautiful and glorious system of divine legislation, for maintaining the laws and protecting the rights of the universe, while the alienated are reconciled and the guilty are pardoned; and though, as abstract truths correctly expounded according to the intention of the framers, they unquestionably inculcate the system of doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures; and though, as landmarks and boundaries between truth and error, they are truly important; yet, as the means for the popular exposition and the saving application of truth, they are far short of the exigencies of the day in which we live,—mere skeletons of truth, compared with the system clothed, and beautified, and inspired with life, as it exists and operates in the Word of God. Unhappily, also, some of the most important truths they inculcate are, in their exposition, so twisted in with the reigning philosophy of the day, as to be in the popular apprehension identified with it; and are made odious and repellant by its errors, as if these philosophical theories were the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. There is no end to the mischief which false philosophy, employed in the exposition and defence of the doctrines of the Reformation, has in this manner accomplished. Good men have contended for theories as if they were vital to the system, and regarded as heretical those who received the doctrine of the Bible, and only rejected their philosophy.

* * * * * * *

It is my deliberate opinion that the false philosophy which has been employed for the exposition of the Calvinistic system, has done more to obstruct the march of Christianity, and to paralyze the saving power of the Gospel, and to raise up and organize around the Church the unnumbered multitude to behold and wonder, and despise and perish, than all other causes beside. * * *

The points to which I allude, as violated by a false philosophy, are the *principles of personal* identity, — by which the posterity of Adam are dis- *from, and not to* be confounded with, their ancestor; the principles of

lity and desert of punishment, that men are not made
nishable for the conduct of Adam, though liable to sin
universal consequence; the nature of sin and holiness,
aterial qualities or the substance of the soul, or as in-
spontaneous action of mind under moral government,
n of all the elements of accountability; and, above all,
decree of God, and the universal certainty of all events
s. To which may be added the nature of the atonement
the doctrines of election and reprobation, as they shine
t through the medium of a perverting philosophy.
philosophical theories appertained to the system dur-
flict for civil and religious liberty against the papal
Europe, men endured, — even swallowed them unhes-
hinkingly, in the presence of a greater evil; but since
ed away, and the nature of mind and moral govern-
stood, and the numbers who think and will think for
the repugnance to this false philosophy has steadily
ncrease, till that which is adventitious and false is
truth is preached in its purity and unbroken power.
7, 68.

the principle of interpretation is claimed;
ngs which Dr. Beecher conceives to have
d in or left out where the Confession is too
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r passages from Edwardean.

eds or confessions of faith, to adopt terms so ambigu-
explanation longer than the confession itself. The
sed in our churches are not thus dubious; but are
all the purposes of a confession of faith, without a
The above mystery has hitherto remained; and its
no small difficulty, because it leads into the region
tions, with which no stranger can intermeddle to
priety. But such is the fact, whatever may have

been the motive. The creed in general uses the common and established language of the Calvinistic faith; and the notes so vary the meaning of the terms as to give the creed a different aspect from that in which this language commonly appears. Taking the creed and the notes in connection, they neutralize each other, so that the whole presents Dr. Taylor as believing nothing at all. In one he says he believes a certain doctrine, in the other he denies it. Or, taking the notes as the explanation of the creed, and Dr. Taylor is exhibited as sailing under false colors, so far as the creed is to be considered his flag. For it seems to mean one thing, and really means another. These views are given hypothetically, and from the external aspects of the transaction, for with the motives I have no concern. To obtain a full view of this mysterious circumstance, it may be expedient to compare some of the articles of this creed with the note appended.

The second article reads thus: "I believe that the eternal purposes of God extend to all actual events, sin not excepted; or that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, and so executes these purposes as to leave the free moral agency of man unimpaired." This language, in its common acceptation, — and the meaning has long been settled by uniform usage, — must be considered as a full confession of the independent government of God. On turning to the notes, we find the following explanation: "But I do not believe that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that as such God prefers it to holiness in its stead. But I do believe that holiness, as the means of good, may be better than sin, and that it may be true that God, all things considered, prefers holiness to sin, in all instances in which the latter takes place." In the creed he says he believes that the purposes of God extend to all events, sin not excepted; and that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass: but in the notes he says he does not believe it can be proved that God prefers sin to holiness, as the means of good, or that he did not even prefer directly the contrary. Here, one of two things must be true: either Dr. Taylor believes that God purposed and foreordained what he did not prefer, but the contrary of which he chose; or he (Dr. Taylor) believes what he does not believe *can be proved*, or the contrary of which *may* be true. But why this ambiguity? If Dr. Taylor believes as he says he does in the note, why not say so in his creed, and put the matter at rest? Why this broad, full, unqualified confession of divine supremacy in the second article; and then this mysterious explanation, which leaves the subject of his faith erly inexplicable?

ls, we find the following confession: "I believe that sequence of the fall of Adam, are born destitute of holi- ture totally depraved." No one can ask for a more s original and entire depravity of man than this lan- long-established usage, conveys. No one, on reading a moment to pronounce Dr. Taylor orthodox on this ays the appendix? "But I do believe that by the wise n of God, all mankind, in consequence of Adam's sin, heir own act." — pp, 6, 7.

all mankind are born destitute of holiness, have we ean that they were born destitute of moral character, aful, but in the same moral condition with young must be Dr. Taylor's meaning, according to his own ieves that men become sinners by their own *act*, and reference. Consequently, to be born destitute of holi- to be born sinful, because men must themselves put preference before they are sinners. If this is Dr. why did he not say so at first? It was just as easy to d article, I believe that all mankind are born destitute er, in the same moral condition with young animals. n explicit, and have saved all note and comment. that all mankind are by nature totally depraved, what ally received meaning, but that men are from their m Adam, possessed of a sinful propensity, that is in nd of their condemnation? There can be no question ways the import of this language. And, without his have any doubt that Dr. Taylor meant to be under- But no such thing. Nothing is further from his mething totally diverse, namely, that the physical ı, that, under the influence of circumstances, he will his meaning, why not say so, — why this play upon on a borrowed dress, when his ideas might have othed in appropriate and intelligible language? —

by this time, perceive the mystery to which I refer. hould thus adopt the decided language of Calvinism ain it another way in his notes. No one questions inian, or Pelagian, if he chooses; no one wishes to joyment of his rights of conscience. But that he

may sail under a false flag, or that he may use the terms of a particular creed to mean directly the opposite of the common acceptation, is seriously questionable. — p. 10.

But, it will be said, probably, that the difference is not respecting the doctrines themselves, but merely about the philosophy of these doctrines, or the theory of explanation. And we shall be told that men may perfectly agree in the facts of religion, and yet differ greatly in the theory of explanation. This may, indeed, be true in some respects, and to some extent; but, when indiscriminately applied, it contains a dangerous sophism, which will subvert every doctrine of the Bible. Take, for example, the case which has been mentioned, if I mistake not, by the author of Views in Theology, of Christ's casting out devils. This *fact* was admitted equally by the Jews and the disciples. But they differed in their theory of explanation. The Jews said that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, and the disciples believed that he cast them out by the finger of God. Was there no essential difference? Could the believers in these different theories hold each other in fellowship? What concord hath Christ with Belial? Again, some men agree in the fact that sinners must experience a moral change, of some sort, to be saved. But one believes that the change is to be effected by his own *desperate efforts*, by his changing his own purpose, and transferring his affections from the world to God, under the influence of truth presented by the Holy Spirit. Another believes that this change is a mere external reformation, and passing from the world into the church. Another believes that it is a new creation wrought in the heart by the special and mighty power of God. If you ask either of these men whether he believes in the doctrine of regeneration, he will say, "O yes, certainly." But is there no essential difference in their belief, — will no different results proceed from it, — and can they consistently hold each other in fellowship? The fallacy of this argument consists in assuming that agreement in a term or name is agreement in a fact, or that agreement in some parts of a statement is agreement in the whole. It assumes that those who have the terms regeneration, total depravity or special grace, in their creeds, are agreed in the main facts of religion. But far otherwise is the truth. Difference in the theory of explanation in many cases may involve the vital principles of religion. This is true of the doctrine of free grace, of the justification of men by faith alone, and of the doctrine of the al perseverance of believers. These doctrines, though admitted as to the s, may be so explained as to involve the subversion of all moral oblig- and the admission of rank Antinomianism. And will this make no

ult? Ought it to be no ground of separation? You
nfidence can be placed in this new theological alchemy,
r's stone, which is expected to turn every jarring creed
is, if adopted, will produce Catholicism to the full. For
arth will refuse to adopt an orthodox creed, if you will
s own meaning to it, and to explain it in his own way.
s I have no confidence in the plea which is urged by Dr.
ter to Dr. Woods, and which has been so often urged
s. The truth is, we regard the points in debate as
istian system, and that the manner of explaining them
pted is opening the flood-gates of heresy and infidelity.
conscience, assent to these speculations, even by our
as in duty bound, — for so the Scriptures expressly
, — bear testimony against these errors. — pp. 22, 23.

understand him to say, at one time, that he
right of interpreting these passages of the
e Church herself had interpreted them; but
at the Church, as a Church, never has given
on of her standards; and for this obvious
en once her principles have been settled and
form of a Confession, all interpretation is at
decides to review and alter her creed. The
ands there in her Confession; which Confes-
ived in the obvious sense of its words, and all
nisters and rulers in her connection are
e that Confession ex animo, without explan-
this, I might refer to every adjudicated
rds of the General Assembly. That body
give any interpretation of the Church's
nply proceed to compare the language and
luals therewith. The standards are con-
a straight rule, but interpretation can only
the straight rule is to be bent so as to
with every curve or right angle to which it

is applied. Instead of this, the curves and the right angles should be brought alongside the straight rule, and then the discrepancy will at once be obvious to all.

Dr. Beecher, in his sermon, with a view to prove its orthodoxy, refers to certain authorities; which references are made both in the body of the discourse itself, and in the notes. These authorities consist either of what are called by some, standard writers, or standard adjudications. There is, however, but one adjudication mentioned, and that is by the Synod of Dort. It will, however, no doubt, be pleaded, that we are to regard standard writers as interpreters of the Confession of Faith, and that we are at liberty to refer to them as showing what was the real meaning of its framers. But, in all the references contained in Dr. Beecher's book, there is but one solitary allusion to the Confession of Faith, and but a single quotation from any Presbyterian minister. Why this long array of names? Why are we told of Justin Martyr, of Origen, of Cyprian, of Jerome, of Bernard and the Synod of Dort? Why are we referred to Calvin, and Bellamy, and Hopkins, and Smalley, and West, and Strong, and Dwight, neither of whom ever adopted our standards, or preached or published in conformity with them? Unhappily, one Presbyterian minister, and that as sound a man and as ripe a scholar as is to be found in any age,—I mean Dr. Witherspoon,—and he in but one single sentence in all his works, has varied a hair's breadth from the standard he acknowledged; and that single sentence has been seized upon with avidity.

But the appeal is made also to our theological seminaries. We are, it seems, to interpret our standards, not only according to Justin Martyr, and Origen, and Cyprian, and Bernard, but according to the interpretation put upon them

by our seminaries. And why are these quoted? It is according to the old fashion, which prevailed before the Confession of Faith was ever framed, and continued to prevail long afterward. It was the fashion of the day to refer theological questions to the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, and nobody knows how many more; and what they decided, that was to be the interpretation. Well, let it be so, if it can be; but I will show you something about our seminaries. What does Prof. Stuart hold? He is a professor of high standing in a seminary where multitudes of our young men receive their preparation for the Christian ministry; and I have not heard any one, who came from thence, that did not say that both Prof. Stuart and Dr. Woods advised them to adopt the Confession of Faith; and yet, what were the sentiments which Prof. Stuart publicly preached and afterwards published, in reference to Confessions? I will quote a passage or two from a sermon preached by him at the dedication of Hanover-street church, Boston, in 1826.

> What, then, are the peculiarities which distinguish them, and which render it proper to say of them that they meet *in the name of Christ*, or on account of him? A very interesting and a very delicate question; one which, however, my text leads me to make an attempt briefly to answer. If I am not fully, I am at least in some good measure, aware of the responsibility and difficulty of the case. But I am not going to dogmatize. I shall appeal to no councils, no fathers, no creeds, no catechisms, no works of the schoolmen, no labors of acute and metaphysical divines,—in a word, to no human system whatever. All, all of these are made by frail, erring men. They are not of any *binding authority*, and we have a warrant that is sufficient, not to receive them, or any of them, as possessing *such* authority. I advert to the warning of our Saviour, which bids us *call no man master upon earth; for there is one who is our Master that dwelleth in heaven.*—pp. 12, 13.

Now, what is the testimony here? (And Dr. Beecher

adopted the same sentiment.) I object not to the language, but to the application of it. Faithful adherence to a creed, after we have once adopted it, is calling no man master. Professor Stuart says:

Another peculiar trait of Christians, as drawn in the New Testament, is, that they render religious homage to the Saviour.

On this topic, as well as on others, I stand not in this sacred place to descant as a polemic. With human creeds or subtleties, or school distinctions and speculations, I have at present nothing to do. Creeds judiciously composed, supported by Scripture, and embracing essential doctrines only, are useful as a symbol of common faith among churches. But they are not the *basis* of a Protestant's belief; nor should they be regarded as the *vouchers* for it. — pp. 24, 25.

So much for the authority of this seminary.

But now let us go to another seminary, and hear what language it holds. I quote from a book entitled, "A Plea for United Christian Action," by R. H. Bishop, D.D.

To what an extent diversity of opinion as to doctrines exists among the ministers of the Presbyterian Church of the present generation, very few, I am persuaded, are prepared to say with any degree of exactness. But were we to compare the present state of opinion with what is known to have been the state of opinion among the divines of a former generation, who are now admitted to have been orthodox, the result likely would be, that we are not more divided on any of the leading doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith than the fathers of that age themselves were. Baxter and Owen, for instance, are readily appealed to by almost every minister of the Presbyterian Church, as standards of correct theological opinion; and yet, these men have given very different explanations of some of the most important doctrines of the Westminster Confession, and neither of these men went in all things with the assembly. Nor have we any reason to believe that the divines of the assembly themselves, in their final vote upon the most of the articles in the Confession, were agreed upon any other principle than the principle of compromise. An approximation towards unity of opinion, as the best modes of expressing our individual

views of divine truth, is all that ever can be obtained in our adherence to a public creed. — p. 18.

If this be true, we must forever live in disobedience to that command of the Bible which enjoins all Christians to "speak the same things."

And now, Sir, as part of my argument, I beg leave to read some passages of my reply to Dr. Bishop.

Has Dr. Bishop yet to learn that the Assembly of Divines did not meet of their own accord; that they were permitted to discuss no subject but what was proposed to them by Parliament; that they were carefully watched by lords and commons, to see that they did not transcend their commission; that they sat long, and carefully investigated every subject committed to their consideration; that when they gave "their final vote" upon each article, they gave *that vote* upon *principle*, and not upon *compromise*; that they were all at liberty, when their labors were ended, and the assembly was dissolved, to adopt the Confession of Faith, catechisms and government, or not, as they pleased; and that Owen, and Baxter, and Usher, and many others, never adopted the standards of the Presbyterian Church? Why, Sir, do you amuse yourself and deceive your hearers by illustrations drawn from the theological differences of such men?

To show that there was no *compromise* in the votes of the Assembly of Divines, I need only cite one or two cases. The assembly were unanimously of opinion that "baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person." But some members thought that dipping or immersion ought to be allowed as "*a mode* of baptism." On this subject the assembly were divided, and the moderator gave the casting vote against immersion. They all agreed that "pouring or sprinkling" was right. But twenty-four out of forty-nine thought immersion might be allowed as "a mode of baptism." When they were so equally divided upon "a mode" of external ordinance, and no *compromise* could be had, and when the majority inserted in the book that "dipping the person in water is not necessary," but that "baptism as ordained by Christ is the *washing with water* by sprinkling or pouring water upon the person, in the name of the Father, &c.," can any sober-minded man believe they would *compromise* the essential truths of salvation?

Take another case. The Assembly of Divines, of Westminster, was, at

first, composed of Episcopalians, Erastians, Independents and Presbyterians. I know not that any of the Anabaptists, Neonomians, or Antinomians, were members. The Parliament sent an order "that the Assembly of Divines and others should forthwith confer, and treat among themselves, of such a discipline and government as may be most agreeable to God's Holy Word, and to deliver their advice touching the same, to both houses of Parliament, with all convenient speed." A plan was proposed, in order to unite all parties, namely, that every bishop should be independent, and that synods and councils should be for concord, and not for government. Archbishop Usher was agreed to this plan. But no *compromise* could be obtained. The Presbyterian form of church government was adopted. I find no case of *compromise*, but in regard to the Solemn League and Covenant. The Scots' commissioners were instructed "to promote the extirpation of popery, prelacy, heresy, schisms, scepticism and idolatry, and to endeavor an union between the two kingdoms, in one confession of faith, one form of church government, and one directory of worship."

The solemn league and covenant was to pave the way for all this, and was to be considered the safeguard of religion and liberty. This league was adopted in Scotland, none opposing it but the king's commissioners. When it was presented to the two houses of Parliament, they referred it to the Assembly of Divines, where it met with opposition.

"Dr. Featly declared he durst not abjure prelacy absolutely, because he had sworn to obey his bishop in all things lawful and honest; and therefore proposed to qualify the second article thus: 'I will endeavor the extirpation of popery, and all anti-Christian, tyrannical, or independent prelacy;' but it was carried against him. Dr. Burgess objected to several articles, and was not without some difficulty persuaded to subscribe, after he had been suspended." This looks very much like the days of *compromise*, does it not? Yet, there was a compromise. Mr. Gataker and *many others* declared for primitive episcopacy, or for one stated president, with his presbyters to govern every church, and refused to subscribe till a parenthesis was inserted, declaring what sort of prelacy was to be abjured.

The Scots, who had been introduced into the assembly, were for abjuring episcopacy as simply unlawful; but the English divines were generally against it. The English pressed chiefly for a civil league, but the Scots would have a religious one, to which the English were *obliged* to yield, taking care, at the same time, to leave a door open for a latitude of interpretation. Here was a *compromise*. And what was the door of "latitude of interpretation"? It was this: The English inserted the phrase "of

ing to the Word of God ;" by which they thought them-
m the inroads of Presbytery. The Scots inserted the
g to the practice of the best reformed churches," in which
nt their discipline must be included. Here was a *com-*
nunity. The English were obliged to adopt a religious
nant, or not obtain the assistance of the Scots in a war
arrying on in defence of civil and religious liberty. As
uch more extensive and minute than mine, I beg you to
nces where compromises were made, and a latitude of
ered on points of doctrine. I believe it will be a difficult
ty member of the New School, to do this. And if this be
hear no more about *compromising* the truths of God.

to impress upon the mind of every member
, that it is out of place to quote the opinions
dard writers, and interpret the Confession of
The opinions of men, on the contrary, must
standard as to a straight line. Still more
uote men who never adopted our standards at
Bishop refers us to Baxter and Owen, who
erent explanations of some of the most im-
es of the Westminster Confession," as Dr.
What have these different explanations to do
ion of Faith? If men do not adopt the Con-
rious their opinions have nothing to do with
do adopt it, and then give opinions different
reed should be brought up, proposition by
by line, word by word, to the straight line,
s and turnings may be discovered. I will
e case in illustration. I published a sermon
When its orthodoxy was questioned, I
on laid side by side with the Confession of
tor of the *New York Evangelist* reviewed

that sermon; and, in the course of his review, what does he say? That Dr. Woods advised his pupils, if they should change their theological views, still to retain the same language. But that editor himself, with more honesty, denies both language and thing. If he has falsified Dr. Woods, he alone is responsible for it.

[Professor BIGGS inquired for the copy of the *Evangelist* to which Dr. Wilson referred. But the doctor replied that he had had only a borrowed copy, which was not now in his possession.]

The editor of the *Evangelist* says that he agrees with me, and I with him, as to the sense of the standards; but that I, and all who hold in sentiment with me, are absurd. Now, I think that the editor is quite as orthodox as those who, while they contradict the doctrine of the standard, still retain its language; and, while he is equally orthodox, he is a little more honest. Yes, sir, I love that man, though I hate his errors; I love him for his frankness, and for his honesty. He comes plump up to the mark, and speaks out what he means.

To sum up what I have to say on this subject, I deny the justice of this claim of interpretation, for the following reasons:

(1.) Because, when a Confession of Faith is settled, interpretation is at an end; until it becomes unsettled, and a resolution is formed to reconsider and alter it.

(2.) Because no one is compelled to adopt the Confession of Faith; and those who do are bound to adopt it in its obvious, unexplained sense.

(3.) Where the right of interpretation is claimed and exercised, it induces endless disputes; and men will use an

orthodox language, and still teach error by explaining away the language they use.

(4.) The judicatories of the Church, in giving decisions upon erroneous opinions, never explain the standards, but simply compare the language of which complaint is made with the language of the book. All the decided cases have brought alleged error by the side of the standards in their obvious language. Witness the decisions in the cases of Balch, Davis, Stone, Craighead, and the Cumberland Presbyterians. The compromise was adopted only in the case of Barnes.

You sit here as judges and jurors. As jurors, you decide the facts; as judges, you compare the facts with the law in its obvious meaning,— that is, as unexplained.

5. Duty compels me to notice a fifth obstacle to a right decision in this case; and which is found in the real condition of this court. I feel, Sir, that I am speaking on a delicate subject. I hope I shall speak so as not to give offence.

[Mr. RANKIN here interposed, and inquired whether it was in order for Dr. Wilson to impugn the integrity of the Presbytery.

The *Moderator* replied that it would not be in order, but advised Mr. Rankin to wait until he heard what Dr. Wilson had to say.]

Dr. WILSON said that he had no wish to impugn the motives of any man. But it was known that, at this time, and ever since Dr. Beecher had been received into the Presbytery, there was a large majority of its members who coincided with him in his theological views. While some, with pain and with great reluctance, but for conscience' sake, are constrained to oppose them; others have taken him by the hand, circulated his sermons, praised his works, and held him up as

the first theologian of his day. Could it be supposed or expected that brethren in such a situation would be willing to bring up Dr. Beecher to the standards of the Church, and try him and his works by that rule? In condemning him, must they not condemn themselves? And was it to be expected that they should be willing to commit suicide?

[Mr. RANKIN again interposed, and declared that such language was wholly inadmissible.

Dr. BEECHER said that he wished Dr. Wilson to be permitted to say all he had to say on that topic.]

Dr. WILSON replied that he was done; he had nothing more to say respecting it.

6. A sixth obstacle is found in the fact that many orthodox and excellent sentiments had been preached and published by Dr. Beecher. All this he most freely and cheerfully admitted. But, said he, the question is, when we find orthodox sentiments contained in a certain book, but also find thrown in and linked in, and (to use an expression of Dr. Beecher's) "twisted in," with these orthodox sentiments, a set of most heretical and pernicious opinions, what is it but a concealing of poison amidst wholesome aliment? Is not the poison the more dangerous, from the inviting food with which it is surrounded? And can anything be worse than the practice of such artifice? Sir, on this subject let me show you a book. It is entitled "The Gospel Plan," by Wm. C. Davis; and in this book may be found some of the finest possible passages, both as to the eloquence of the language and the soundness and orthodoxy of the sentiments they convey. There is a great deal of such sentiment, and presented in the ablest and most convincing manner. In fact, the greater part of the book is of this character. Yet this book contains the most pernicious

where is the poison to be found? In com-
a few pages, though in a covert manner it is
many more. And what was the fate of Wm.
e was convicted of heresy, and suspended from
But did the Presbytery which tried him
e work of six hundred pages on his trial, in
ut the error? No, Sir; they extracted eight
hich were short, concise, and decidedly errone-
I will give you two as a specimen; and one
self-same words, is contained in Dr. Beecher's
Native Character of Man. The proposition
ould not make Adam or any other creature
unholy. And the sentiment is, that where
is yet no choice, there can be nothing in the
good or bad. And what says Dr. Beecher in
He declares that no action can be either holy
ss there is understanding, conscience and a
ner proposition is, that no just law ever con-
ates a man for not doing that which he cannot
often was that very sentiment asserted and
d and reiterated, in the sermon which was
rday? I shall not pretend to say, but leave
de.

moved, or at least attempted to remove, out
I conceive to be important obstacles in the
cision, I shall now proceed to examine the
es, *seriatim*, with their several specifications,
in support of them.

took a recess of ten minutes.

FIRST CHARGE.

The court being reassembled, Dr. Wilson proceeded to read again the first charge. [See it on page 85.]

He then quoted the Confession of Faith, ch. VI. sects. 3, 4, 6:

III. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

Also the Larger Catechism, questions 26, 27:

Q. 26. How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?

A. Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

Q. 27. What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

A. The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bondslaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.

He next read the passage from Dr. Beecher's sermon on the Native Character of Man, beginning (page 72) "A depraved nature is by many understood, &c.," and ending (page 74) "The fool has said in his heart, no God."

The preceding part of this sermon was intended to prove that man is not religious by nature. It will be recollected that throughout the whole of what precedes this passage there is a mixture of that which has a wrong tendency, and is

andards of our Church. For, let it not be for-
hen the original proposition has been sustained,
ı is introduced for the purpose of explanation, in
what the writer means by the term accounta-
passages where the meaning of that term is not
And the explanation goes to show that the sen-
writer is, that *there is a period in numan ex-*
the creature is neither good nor bad. Now,
, whether this sentiment does or does not coin-
tandards of our Church. Is it not at variance
ıay, does it not positively contradict them? The
be answered in the affirmative, and the stand-
urch must be sustained. I might easily go on
cording to this doctrine, the condition in which
aced under the moral government of God is
m neither for heaven nor for hell; for, ac-
Beecher, they are neither holy nor sinful. In
which, I might as easily prove, according to
the Apostle Paul, and the faith of all sound
they are under condemnation, although they
according to the similitude of Adam's trans-
standards keep up a constant distinction be-
sin, the turpitude conveyed by it, and the
urred previous to the time of volition on
tual sin on the other, as proceeding from the
rupted nature of the children of Adam, who
r a broken covenant, and whose fallen nature
hout their knowledge or consent, from the
n in which they stand to Adam, their repre-
t father.

t sin in any man, there are none who deny
y. But our standards teach that it is never-

theless only a corrupt stream proceeding from a corrupt fountain. This the sermon denies; and holds that, previous to this, the creature is neither good nor bad. Let us here apply our Saviour's own rule of judgment. He says that a good tree brings forth good fruit; and a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. But a tree which is neither good nor bad can produce neither good nor bad fruit. If it be true that actions proceeding from any nature are in accordance with the nature from which they proceed, then that which proceeds from a nature neither holy nor sinful, can itself be neither sinful nor holy.

But it is said that those who deny this, place mind and matter upon the same footing; and that the error of those who think that men are born in sin arises from supposing that the nature of mind and matter is the same. Hear what the sermon says on this subject:

> A depraved nature is by many understood to mean a constitutional nature, sinful prior to choice, and producing sinful choice by an unavoidable necessity, as fountains of water pour forth their bitter streams, or trees produce their bitter fruit. The mistake lies in a virtual implication that the nature of matter and mind are the same; whereas they are entirely different. The nature of matter excludes powers of perception, understanding and choice. But the nature of accountable mind includes them all. Neither a holy or a depraved nature, in the strict sense, is *possible*, without acts of understanding, conscience and choice. — pp. 72, 73.

Does the writer mean to say that none of the animals has a depraved nature? that the serpent, the vulture, the tiger, have not a nature that is depraved? This he does not mean. But, if they have, whence did they derive it? whence, but from the curse of the fall? Would there have been any evil among animals, if God had not said, "Cursed is the ground for [illegible]e"? Still there is a wide difference between the rela-

se inferior beings sustain to Adam and that children sustain to him. Yet, according to the not so.

r. The court has the sermon in its hands, and t as I can be, to compare it with the standards and to see how far they agree or disagree. Nor see that this is but one part of a system which l must carry out to other and most important t these results are, I shall show hereafter.

SECOND CHARGE.

now again read the second charge. [See it on so the following from the Confession of Faith,

into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being rom that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own t himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

lso read the following from the Larger Cate- 5; and Shorter Cat., Questions 101, 103:

isteth the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell? is of that estate whereinto man fell consisteth in the it sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was ruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly nd that continually; which is commonly called Original do proceed all actual transgressions.

ay for in the first petition?

ition (which is, Hallowed be thy name) we pray that s and others to glorify him in all that whereby he n; and that he would dispose of all things to his own

ay for in the third petition?

tition (which is, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in

heaven) we pray that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

With respect to what is here said concerning Free Will, the declarations of our standards are proved by facts recorded in the Scripture. The first declaration is proved by the fact, that Adam was not forced to eat the forbidden fruit; the second is proved from the fact, that Adam at first did good, and then did evil. And the third is no less proved by fact and daily observation: for men never do convert themselves, nor prepare themselves for being converted. They are wholly indisposed and unable, from the fall, to do either. But the framers of this confession, speaking of the will, say that the inability is an inability of the will. But, in the questions of the catechism, and through the standards generally, they take a just distinction between ability and will. It is, indeed, said that man is unwilling to keep the commandments of God, but they give a fuller explanation when they come to state what it is we ought to pray for; for there they teach the Church that she is to ask God to make her both able and willing to keep his commandments. And I have cited these passages to prevent any cavil that might find seeming justification in the phraseology of this chapter on the will. From the words of the chapter alone, it might be argued, that though man has lost the will, he still retains the natural ability to keep the divine law. But what the chapter does mean on this subject is afterwards more fully explained, and from these subsequent explanations it is perfectly clear that our standards deny in a fallen man both ability and will to do anything spiritually good.

Dr. Wilson now read again the second specification. [See page 87.]

nd an extract from Dr. Beecher's sermon on
d Free Agency.

be accountable, then, and he is accountable, for his im-
belief, though he will not turn, and God may never turn
s able and only unwilling to do what God commands, and
s, would save his soul. Indeed, to be able and unwilling
e only possible way in which a free agent can become de-
nation and punishment. So long as he is able and willing
ı be no sin; and the moment the ability of obedience
ssion of sin becomes impossible. — p. 22.

uestion naturally arises, How does it happen
titudes of the human family suffer so much as
s to the possession of the knowledge, conscience,
hich is declared to be essential to all sin? He
pages 31, 32, 36.

ear the light of his conviction shines, the more distinct
ception that he is — not destitute of capacity, but in-
o obey the Gospel. Does the Spirit of God produce con-
contrary to fact, and contrary to the teachings of the
That, then, when he moves on to that work of sovereign
ner ever resisted, and without which no one ever sub-
hat does he do? When he pours the daylight of omnis-
ul, and comes to search out what is amiss, and put in
s out of the way, what impediment to obedience does
d, and what work does he perform? He finds only the
obstinately persisting in its sinful choice; and in the
he accomplishes is, to make the sinner willing. — p. 31.
esisted alone, but the ability of man perverted and
lown upon him guilt and condemnation. The influence
gs wholly to the remedial system. Whereas ability
requirement is the equitable and everlasting founda-
ernment of God. — p. 32.
se are just the other way. The doctrine of man's free
ability as the ground of obligation and guilt, and of his
reason of sin, has been the received doctrine of the
ll ages. — p. 36.

To prove that this is the doctrine of the orthodox church, we have here a long array of names of men, the most of whom never so much as professed to embrace our confession; and not a single item from that book which Dr. Beecher so loudly eulogized, and pressed with so much emphasis to his heart.

Dr. Wilson then read the fifth specification. [See it on page 87.] He also read the Confession of Faith, ch. XIII. sec. 1, and ch. XIV. sec. 1.

They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by his word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. — Ch. XIII. sec. 1.

The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word: by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened. — Ch. XIV. sec. 1.

Also the Larger Catechism, Question 72:

Q. 72. What is justifying faith?

A. Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

He then read from Dr. Beecher's sermon, page 43.

One would think that a subject of God's glorious government, who can but will not obey him, might appear to himself and to the universe much more accountable, and much more guilty, in the day of judgment, than one whose capacity of obedience had been wholly annihilated by the fall.

Adam. Does it illustrate the glory of God's justice more to punish the helpless and impotent than to punish the voluntary but incorrigible?

In answer to this, it might be said, that, for God to punish the innocent and the helpless, would exhibit his character only in the light of a tyrant. But, as he does punish the infants of our race, it remains for Dr. Beecher to reconcile what he here says with the standards of our Church. Where is there a single sentence in those standards which contains the assertion that all capacity of obedience has been *annihilated* by the sin of Adam? And here I may remark, that the disciples of the new school, when speaking on the subject of original sin, either deny or caricature it.

Dr. Wilson here read further extracts from Dr. Beecher's sermon.

Also from the *Christian Spectator* for 1825, p. 100, as follows:

Men are free agents; in the possession of such faculties, and placed in such circumstances, as to render it practicable for them to do whatever God requires; reasonable that he should require it; and fit that he should inflict literally the entire penalty of disobedience. Such ability is here intended as lays a perfect foundation for government by law, and for rewards and punishment according to deeds.

The Presbytery now adjourned. Closed with prayer.

FRIDAY MORNING.

The Presbytery met, and opened with prayer.

CHARGE THIRD.

Dr. Wilson read the third charge. [See it on page 88.] Also the Confession of Faith, ch. VI. secs. 2, 4, ch. IX. 3.

L. C. Ques. 25 [quoted page 147], 149, 190. S. C. Ques. 101, 103 [quoted page 147].

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

III. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

Q. 149. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God: but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed.

Q. 190. What do we pray for in the first petition?

A. In the first petition (which is, *Hallowed be thy name*), acknowledging the utter inability and indisposition that is in ourselves, and all men, to honor God aright, we pray that God would, by his grace, enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and highly to esteem him, his titles, attributes, ordinances, word, works, and whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by; and to glorify him in thought, word and deed; that he would prevent and remove atheism, ignorance, idolatry, profaneness, and whatsoever is dishonorable to him; and, by his overruling providence, direct and dispose all things to his own glory.

He then quoted Dr. Beecher's sermon:

When he pours the daylight of omniscience upon the soul, and comes to search out what is amiss, and put in order that which is out of the way, what impediment to obedience does he find to be removed, and what work does he perform? He finds only the will perverted, and obstinately persisting in its sinful choice; and in the day of his power all he accomplishes is to make the sinner willing. — p. 31.

The idea here conveyed is, that the Spirit of God makes a *sinner willing* in no other way than by presenting truth to

his mind in a clearer manner than the preacher can exhibit it. He here read from the sermon, p. 22.

> So long as the sinner is able and willing to obey, there can be no sin; and the moment the ability of obedience ceases, the commission of sin becomes impossible.

Dr. Beecher here teaches Perfection in two ways. For it follows that when any creature has rendered himself incapable of doing good he can commit no sin. And, according to this doctrine, the devils must be perfectly sinless, ever since the first sin which they committed; for I suppose none will deny that by their first sin they rendered themselves incapable of good: and, the ability ceasing, all sin ceased likewise. But Dr. Beecher, in the first part of his sermon, maintains that the sinner is naturally able to keep the whole law of God, and here he declares that the Spirit makes him willing to do it, and that while he is both able and willing there can be no sin. And how can there be? The conclusion is perfectly logical. It is entirely irrefragable, and follows by necessary consequence from the premises.

And, on this part of my subject, I will turn to that part of the specification which declares that some of the Perfectionists have been inmates of Lane Seminary; and I now call upon the clerk to read the testimony which has been taken before Presbytery, and recorded, touching that fact.

The testimony was here read accordingly. [See it on pp. 95, 96, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 110, 111.]

After listening to this testimony, I suppose there can be no doubt of the truth of the statement, that some of the Perfectionists were inmates of Lane Seminary. For, if this was not the fact, and if the leaven of that heresy was not operating there, and if no fear was entertained that it might

increase, and thereby affect the interests of that institution, why was it necessary for Dr. Beecher to give his students a warning against it? For it seems that the letter to Weld was not known in the seminary. The witnesses met with it elsewhere. And what says Mr. Weed? That although the students expressed no decided opinion in favor of that system in presence of Dr. Beecher, yet he knew of many who avowed to each other the opinion that every exercise of the mind was either entirely holy or entirely sinful. If we are to credit his word,— and no one thinks of doubting it,— then the fact is established, not only from Dr. Beecher's finding it necessary to deliver a set lecture in opposition to those sentiments, but from the fact that many of the students avowed them. No one will deny the propriety of young men in a theological seminary investigating every subject of a theological kind. That is all right and proper. But when we have it in evidence that many of them received and avowed the sentiment, that every exercise of the mind is either entirely holy or entirely sinful, does it not show that they denied any such warfare in the bosom of a Christian as is spoken of in the Confession of Faith and in the Scriptures? God forbid that I should speak a word against Christian Perfection! I well know that it is one of the precious doctrines of the Bible; and, when properly understood, it is what I long to feel for myself, and to see far more prevalent than it is among us. But while I see Perfection enjoined in the Bible, and while I hear holy men earnestly praying for its attainment, and while I can say that I delight in the law of God after the inward man, I am nevertheless constrained to add, that I see another law in my members which wars against [illegible] law of my mind. I can say that to will is present with [illegible] but how to perform that which is good I find not. O,

wretched man that I am,— who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Now, I would ask, if I had full ability before I was converted, what has become of it? I have it not now. Even when I will, I cannot perform. There is a law in my members which wars against the law in my mind, and brings me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members; and who shall deliver me? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are complete in him. And this is Christian Perfection; but not that Perfection which is taught in this sermon, or held by the students in Lane Seminary, or by the Perfectionists of New Haven.

With respect to these Perfectionists, let me do them justice. They are, for the most part, highly talented men, and men of amiable dispositions; but they are misguided. And how came they to be misguided? I shall show. The fact that such young men were in Lane Seminary I have not charged as a crime upon Dr. Beecher. Can a professor hinder the presence of corrupt students among the young men under his charge? It is, indeed, a serious question, whether such ought to be excluded. Dr. Mason was the only man who ever expelled a student from a theological institution for holding heretical opinions. And has it not been made a subject of grave complaint, that there were in Princeton Seminary some who came there with the express view of making proselytes to false doctrine? I never alleged it as any offence in Dr. Beecher. And I introduced it merely to show that Dr. Beecher's sentiments, whatever he might have intended, do lead directly to such results. No man will pretend to blame him for warning his students against sentiments, or for delivering a set lecture in opposition to them. But where is the consistency of such a course? He advocates a theory which naturally leads to this; a theory which men do under-

stand; which men not only of cultivated minds, but of very devotional feeling, have understood, and have perceived that it does lead to such consequences. If Dr. Beecher had come plainly up and openly renounced those doctrines to which his system led,— if he had declared, with manly frankness, that, though he had been the unhappy instrument of leading those who confided in him to the adoption of such opinions, he nevertheless repudiated and condemned them,— this would have been consistent and praiseworthy. But, when he suffered his sentiments still to stand unobliterated and not denied in the text of his sermon, and then proceeded to warn these young men against that which was the necessary consequence, it was, to say the least, not a very consistent course. All can see, who have eyes to see, the perfect incongruity.

We heard a good deal yesterday concerning what these Perfectionists hold. They publish a newspaper called *The Perfectionist*, the editors of which, Messrs. Whitmore and Buckingham, are responsible for everything that appears in it. Let these gentlemen speak for themselves. Here Dr. Wilson read the following quotation:

> We believe the Gospel is emphatically glad tidings of redemption from sin, and Christianity is distinguished from the dispensation which preceded it chiefly by the fact that it brings in everlasting righteousness. Hence:
>
> We believe that sinners are not Christians: we object not to calling some of them Jewish saints, or sinful believers, or unconverted disciples, or servants of God, as distinguished from sons; but we affirm that they are out of Christ; for "he that abideth in him sinneth not; he that sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him."

Now, it is proper to know how these young brethren (I still call them brethren, for they are men of much mind and

many respects of good feeling) should fall into
these, and should be so confident in the main-
a. [The same confidence that was displayed
go by the Shakers, in maintaining theirs.]
you. Here Dr. Wilson read as follows:

COLLOQUY. — NO. I.

nd you profess to be perfect, — how is this?
ist is made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification
In the Lord have I righteousness and strength. I will
he Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath
e garments of salvation, he hath covered me with a robe
We are complete or perfect IN HIM. — 1 Cor. 1: 30.
10. Col. 2: 10.
you think we ought to have a righteousness of our own?
righteousnesses are as filthy rags. For they, being igno-
eousness, and going about to establish *their own* right-
submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Not
righteousness, which is the law, but that which is
Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. —
10: 3. Phil. 3: 9.
ys understood that there is no perfection in this life.
our *love made* PERFECT, that we may have holiness in
t; because AS HE [Christ] IS, *so are we* IN THIS WORLD.
nd GOD ALSO, how HOLILY and JUSTLY and UNBLAM-
urselves among you that believe. Be ye followers of
am of Christ. As many of us as be *perfect* be thus
4: 17. 1 Thess. 2: 10. 1 Cor. 11: 1. Phil. 3:

you think it savors of pride to say you live without

Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Not
t of ourselves to *think anything as* of ourselves; but
God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live,
t liveth in me. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us;
ht ALL OUR WORKS IN US. By the grace of God I am
works, lest any man should boast. In God we boast all
raise his name forever. What have we that we have

not received? now, if we receive all as a free gift, why should we glory, as if we had not received it?—Matt. 21: 42. 2 Cor. 3: 5. Gal. 2: 20. Isa. 26: 12. 1 Cor. 15: 10. Eph. 2: 8. Psal. 54: 8. 1 Cor. 4: 7.

B.—Admitting that you are free from sin, would it not be better to avoid professing it?

Ans.—With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation. Go home to thy friends and *tell them* how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he went his way, and *published* throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. I have not *hid* thy *righteousness* within my heart. I have *declared* thy *faithfulness* and thy *salvation*; I have not *concealed* thy *loving-kindness* and thy *truth* from the *great congregation.*—Rom. 10: 10. Mark 5: 19. Luke 8: 16, 39. Ps. 50: 10

This speaks language which cannot be misunderstood. Whatever may be their conceptions with respect to the Reformation, they give the Reformers no credit save for having produced a reform in that which was anti-Christianity; and they assert that God then raised up others who have produced a true reformation, and who have carried it on until this day, when it has issued in that new divinity, of which we have all heard so much. This new divinity, it seems, according to their own account, was the thing which gave them the first stepping-stone; and no wonder,— for, if the premises be true, their argument from them is correct. If it is true that the sinner is able to keep the commandments of God, and if the Spirit makes him willing to keep them, there can be no sin. The inference is most clear and logical; and, if I believed the first position, I would go the whole; nor can there be any consistency in doing otherwise. The friends of the new school must either return and take up the exploded doctrine of *human inability*, or carry out the opposite scheme, and

avow themselves Perfectionists. Let them publicly abandon their whole system; or let them go forward like honest men, and boldly carry it out to its results.

Lest it should be supposed that the Perfectionists have done Dr. Beecher injustice, by associating his name with that of Mr. Finney, I will show how his course was viewed in New England, by some quotations from the letter of Mr. Rand:

Another reason why you are reckoned as a decisive advocate of new principles is, *the associations you have voluntarily formed.* And here we judge according to the common maxim, that a man is known by the company he keeps. — p. 12.

Some years ago, but after Dr. Taylor had made himself conspicuous as a theorizer in theology, Dr. Beecher had occasion to be absent a few weeks from his people, in a time of religious excitement; and he put Dr. Taylor in his place, to preach and "conduct the revival." Dr. Taylor did not harshly obtrude his new theories upon the people at that time; but Dr. Beecher was considered, by discerning men, under all the circumstances of the times, as giving distinct evidence of partiality for his views. When the first protracted meeting in Massachusetts was held at Boston, Dr. Taylor did a large portion of the preaching, and was the only minister from abroad who took part in the public exercises. When Dr. Beecher was in New York, on his way to the West, he is understood to have taken frequent occasion to extol Dr. Taylor, as one of the first theologians of the age. And they who are acquainted with consultations, correspondence and other indications of intimacy, have long told us that these two gentlemen were united in promoting the same theological views. — p. 13.

Now, sir, who was Mr. Finney's principal adviser, coadjutor and confidential friend, from his coming to Boston till he finally left it? I answer, without hesitation, Dr. Beecher. Who *originated* the invitation, I know not. It was extended by Union Church, or their agents. Mr. F. replied, "I am ready to go to Boston, if the ministering brethren are prepared to receive me; otherwise, I must decline." The question was submitted to the pastors assembled. No very decisive answer was given by most, I believe; but Drs. Beecher and Wisner *expressed their doubts* of the expediency of the measure. But their doubts were soon after removed; and he came, with their express approbation, and the acquiescence of others.

He was immediately made the public preacher for the whole Orthodox Congregational interest in Boston, and a contribution was levied upon the churches to support his family for six months. He held public evening meetings, generally twice a week, in a large and central house. These meetings were uniformly notified in the several congregations on the Sabbath. Some of the pastors usually attended with him, took part in the exercises, gave his notices, and *appeared* to act in perfect concert with him, though he was always the preacher. In these movements, Drs. Beecher and Wisner were more prominent and active than all the others; and Dr. Beecher repeatedly declared in public his full accordance with views which had been advanced. — p. 14.

I have read this to show that it is not without reason Dr. Beecher was connected by the Perfectionists with Dr. Taylor and Mr. Finney. The system held by them all is substantially the same, though they do not all express it so fully as Mr. Finney and Dr. Taylor. The testimony we have heard has established the fact, that some of the Perfectionists were students in Lane Seminary. Dr. Beecher's own book has established the 2d specification. It is now with the court to see what is the nature and amount of my charge. I do not blame him that such students were there; nor do I charge him with being a Perfectionist, for he is not aware of it. I merely charge him with preaching sentiments from which those doctrines naturally flow. And if these sentiments are inconsistent with our standards, then let Dr. Beecher say which of the two he renounces, and to which he adheres.

The Presbytery here took a short recess.

FOURTH CHARGE.

Dr. Wilson now read the 4th charge, and 1st specification. [See it on p. 89.] He said that he was not prepared to deny this when he wrote the charge; but he was *now* fully prepared, from historical evidence, to do so.

I will now give a definition of slander. The verb means to belie, to censure falsely. The noun means false invective, disgrace, reproach, disreputation, ill-name. A slanderer is one who belies another, who lays false charges upon another. These are the definitions of Dr. Johnson; and I will now reduce them all to a scriptural definition, which is contained in the 14th chap. of Numbers, 36 and 37 verses:

And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land; even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord.

Now, I say that Dr. Beecher has, in his writings, brought up an evil report upon the Church of God, and upon those ministers who teach the doctrines of the Confession of Faith. To make his impression the deeper, he has given a caricature of their sentiments. Who that holds the doctrine that a sinner is unable to keep the law of God preaches that men ought to engage in the "impenitent use of means"? Is not this a slander? Yet, from what was read here yesterday, it appears that Dr. Beecher continued to utter this slander, even after the charges had been tabled against him. For he contends that it was part of that false philosophy which was twisted into the creeds of the Reformation. And he further states that revivals have always flourished where his doctrine is preached; or, if any have occurred elsewhere, it has been where the old system has been mitigated in its severity; and that it is other doctrines, and not those of the old system, which, in such cases, have been blessed of God. Sir, this is the slander which has, for years past, been cast upon the old school,—that its advocates are the enemies of revivals, and that they preach doctrines which destroy the souls of men.

What did we hear in this Presbytery when a young brother applied for license? Although his doctrines were admitted to be in accordance with the Confession of Faith, and his licensure could not be withheld, yet it was openly declared that such doctrine never converted men. We are told, by Dr. Beecher, that where the doctrines of human inability to keep the commandments of God, inability to convert ourselves, inability to engage in any holy exercises, have been taught, those churches have remained like Egypt by the side of other churches where the opposite doctrines were inculcated. Yes, Sir, like Egypt in its midnight darkness; like the mountains of Gilboa, without dews of heaven, or fields of offering; or like the valley in Ezekiel's vision, where the bones were very many, and dry, very dry.

Now, Sir, I ask, What has been the true history of the revivals thus produced by the preaching of the doctrines of the new school? It has been just what *The Perfectionist* stated. Such revivals have left the churches cold, barren, and spiritually dead. Such has been the utter sterility experienced in the State of New York, and in some parts of New England, that all vitality is gone, and nothing but some new dispensation of Divine grace can renovate the face of the Church. Sir, what has been the history of these revivals on this side of the mountains, in our own region, and within the bounds of our own Presbytery? Wherever the doctrines of the new school have prevailed, and artificial excitements have been got up among the churches, there all vital religion has been prostrated, and the churches sunk into a state of death-like apathy and silence; just such as *The Perfectionist* orms us has taken place on the other side of the moun-
i. But, on the contrary, where the doctrines of the Con-
n *of Faith* have been received and faithfully preached,

the churches are growing, are in a state of order and harmony, and spiritual health universally prevails. Now, to bring up an evil report on a simple individual is slander, provided the report be untrue; to say, indeed, that a drunkard is a drunkard, or that a liar is a liar, is no slander, however imprudent the declaration, under some circumstances, may be. But, where the charge is made, and it turns out to be utterly false, it is the crime of slander, and is punished as such. But what is slander upon an individual, when compared with slander directed against the whole Church of God, against the orthodox in every age, against the blessed apostle who first preached the Gospel to the nations, against the martyrs who freely shed their blood to confirm it, and against the company of the reformers who were ready to lay down their lives in its defence? Look, Sir, at that venerable company of Westminster divines,—men whose talents, learning and piety, have been the theme of just admiration from their own age until the present day;—men who took up and investigated the whole system of divine truth,—who continued to sit for six or seven years, and who yet, when they formed their book, put into it this doctrine of the inability of fallen man;—a doctrine which, it is said, the men of the new school have completely demolished, and with respect to which none, according to Dr. Beecher, had ever a distinct apprehension, so as to rise above the mists by which the subject is surrounded, till the time of Edwards, and those who have since followed the track he marked out;—men who seem continually to cry out, "We are the men, and wisdom will die with us." If this is not bringing up an evil report upon the Church of God, upon the Christian ministry, and upon the whole body of those who are the friends of orthodoxy in this

country, I am quite unable to conceive what ought to be so denominated.

FIFTH CHARGE.

DR. WILSON here read the 5th charge. [See p. 91.]

As the fact here charged has been conceded, I need refer to no proof in its support. Dr. Beecher, however, objects to the introduction of the word "kindred," and has expressed a wish that that word might be erased. To this I shall make no objection, and will only observe that there must be something very wrong when people feel dishonored by their own kin.

The *Moderator* pronounced this remark to be a violation of order.

DR. WILSON said, if it was out of order, he was willing it should be omitted. He thereupon proceeded to read the sixth charge. [See p. 91.]

SIXTH CHARGE.

He commenced his remarks on this charge by quoting Johnson's definition of the terms: "*Hypocrisy*,—dissimulation in respect to moral or religious character;—*Hypocrite*,—a dissembler in morality or religion."

DR. WILSON then read again the 1st specification. [See p. 91.]

Under this specification I shall read from a document produced by Dr. Beecher at the last meeting of Presbytery. He read only a part of it. I wish to read a little more. It is an article from the *Standard*, dated October 20, 1832; and it is not over the signature of J. L. W., although it was yesterday that Dr. Beecher had read nothing but what these initials appended to it:

New York, Oct. 20, 1832.

ave not had the privilege of much personal intercourse feel as if I were intimately acquainted with you. I am r existing circumstances to write you, and hope you will that you may have wisdom and grace as you need ——— ——— The men of the new school talk much of love, for- ice, when they are in the minority, and wish to carry their ı they have the power, ———. The friends of the Re- ', have nothing to fear. I regret that they should, in any ought it necessary to contend against ——— with his own – It appears to me that we need only to pursue a straight y the Word of God and the constitution of our Church, and the great Head of the Church. If we are in the minority, dissent, solemn protest and remonstrance, and thus pre- cience, and be protected in our rights, by the ———. I, pprehensions than I did, and would discountenance any- mbination, management and attempts to overreach, as iew party. Let us be firm in our adherence to the cause teousness. Let us do our duty as Christians and as min- el, and we are under the broad and impenetrable shield God. ——— If we are to be outnumbered and outvoted, has always had a majority. ——— God has always had ie Church has always been preserved. ——— Perhaps re something better in store for us than we have feared. revent the spread of error in that branch of his Church ig. It may be that ——— shall not have a majority in ı this region who were *on the fence*, who were taken with l and devotedness, and felt inclined to favor their meas- ieir eyes opened, have seen the tendency of their meas- een disgusted with the men. They begin to feel the rding our standards, and are convinced that the matter veen ——— is something more than a question about he sessions of our Synod have just closed. The doings vere such as to try our strength. We have a large and f old-school men. The opening sermon was preached by e country, Mr. Thompson, who was in the assembly last onest, bold and faithful, — much more so than we were ——— Most of our time was occupied in rectifying the ie 3d Presbytery. When that Presbytery was formed,

we expected strange proceedings; but our expectations have been far exceeded. They have held thirty-five meetings during the year, and have licensed and ordained a very large number of men.

In the judgment of the Synod, expressed by a decided vote, they have violated the constitution in three instances, namely: 1. In dismissing a private member of the Church, a female, over the heads of the Session. ——— The Presbytery gave her a dismission and letter of recommendation to another church, which church would not receive her. So she is still under their care. ———

2. In receiving Mr. Leavitt, of this city, editor of the *Evangelist*, without any credentials whatever. He was introduced to the Presbytery by Dr. Cox, and received on their personal knowledge of him, without a dismission from his association or dismissing council.

3. In receiving Dr. Beecher, without the *requisite* credentials, and by letter, and dismissing him to ——— Presbytery, without his appearing before them at all. ——— He sent a written subscription to the questions in our book, with a request to be received; also a recommendation from the association to which he belonged; but not from the dismissing council, which is the only ecclesiastical body which could give him credentials. Yet they received him. He was thus ——— into a Presbyterian, that he might accept his *call*, and become Professor in the Lane Seminary. They knew he did not intend to reside within their bounds; but to accommodate him, and prevent ———, they received and dismissed him *in transitu*. ——— They were very sensitive, and affected to consider our objections to their proceedings an attack upon Dr. Beecher, which was furthest from our intentions. It was not his fault that they acted unconstitutionally. But you perceive the tendency of such proceedings.

The committee appointed, ———, to examine their records, being of their own school, reported favorably; but, in their statistical report, we learned the fact, in the case of Dr. B., and objected. ——— After considerable discussion, a *special* committee was appointed to examine their records, who brought their doings to light. ——— Two of their members were refused admission into ——— Presbytery, and were not permitted to preach in the vacant churches within their bounds. ——— These are trying times, and call for union and concert of prayer. I desire to feel that our hope is in God alone. We need his guidance and protection; and having that, we have nothing to fear.

A member of the court here inquired whether this paper had any signature.

ɴ replied that it had not, and that he should
. at liberty to produce it, had not Dr. Beecher
d to do so first. Dr. Wilson then read the 2d
[See p. 91.]
ct to this, I only need to remark, that what I
e charge of slander shows conclusively that Dr.
consider the difference of doctrine to be material
: that it is not a mere logomachy, nor is there a
difference between the two systems. Far from
ells us that one of these systems of doctrine
ipses the glory of the Sun of Righteousness,
nore to hinder the salvation of souls than any-
ie Church; while the other is blessed of heaven,
ght and life wherever it goes. Yet, while he
the standards of our Church, and places the
n so strong contrast, he does — what? I do
adopts our standards, because I have no proof
ias adopted them. But I do say, that if he
n, he is guilty of hypocrisy; and no man can
from the charge. For he must be a hypocrite
cordially to adopt that which he disbelieves,
loes his best to bring into disrepute.
then read the 3d specification. [See p. 91.]
pecification I call for the reading of the testi-
ıs been taken before this court, touching the
ıde by Dr. Beecher respecting the Confession
he stood before the Synod.
ıy was read accordingly. [See it on pp. 93,

tion under which this testimony is introduced
e charge of dissimulation; and it seems, from
that Dr. Beecher has seen a time when he

could not adopt our standards fully. I do not know when this time was, for I never have been able to draw that out of him. Dr. Beecher himself stated, on a former occasion, that he commenced his ministry on Long Island by adopting the Confession of Faith as a Presbyterian minister; that he then removed into New England, and took the charge of a Congregational Church, but without any change in his religious sentiments. The Confession of Faith was still his creed, and although he acted under the provisions of the Plan of Union, he still approved the form of government adopted and practised in the Presbyterian Church. He afterward left the Congregational Churches, and entered the body to which we belong. At this time, it seems, he still professed to adhere to our standards, but it was under certain explanations of the terms there used. In the sermon which has been read before you, he admits that the language of the Reformers spoke of man's inability, but that this language was not understood, and that, therefore, he has a right of interpretation, inasmuch as the Church has interpreted her own creed. Admitting that he did adopt the standards fully, with this right of explanation, still, when his right to explain was called in question, when the language of his sermons was made a subject of controversy, when he came before Synod in consequence, and found himself in peculiar circumstances, surrounded by a large popular assembly, and placed before an ecclesiastical body the complexion of which was well known, and a majority of whose members adhered to the standards in their literal sense and obvious meaning, Dr. Beecher made those statements respecting his belief in our Confession of Faith which have been given in testimony before you. He made them, the witnesses say, with an emphasis peculiarly *pressive*. One witness spoke of the waving of his hand,

r tells you that he clasped the book to his bosom
ulation that was very unusual to him, and then
the form of an oath, that he believed those
contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing
. This took place in the autumn of 1833; and
pring of 1835, what does Dr. Beecher publish?
, with respect to the creeds of the Reformers,
ting his own creed, that on some topics they
l than the proportion of faith would require at
le, as a means of popular instruction and the
ruth, their language falls far short of what is
he times in which we live.

Where is the man in this house, who, upon his
an state that he believes this Confession of
n the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
'or myself, I can say, unhesitatingly, that it
he truth; and further, that, according to my
s the most perfect system of doctrine which has
piled by human effort. Yet I could not say
nothing but the truth, although there is noth-
I object to. Still less can I say that it con-
e truth, for I know that it does not. It is
ore, that the declaration made by Dr. Beecher,
od, was made in a reckless manner. And,
rcumstances of the case into view,—remember-
ood, and that his standing and orthodoxy as a
ter were at stake,—it appears to me equally
e declaration was made for popular effect. And
ce published shows that he believes our stand-
hort of what is called for by the exigency of
l, of course, that it does not contain the whole

[Dr. BEECHER here inquired whether the language last referred to had been by him applied to the Confession of Faith.

Dr. WILSON replied that he so understood it.]

Dr. WILSON proceeded to read again extracts from Dr. Beecher's book, entitled, "The Causes and Remedy of Scepticism." [Already quoted. See vol. I. p. 65.]

Here, said Dr. Wilson, he is attempting to show that the very creeds of the Reformation are calculated to produce scepticism. He says that they are mere skeletons. What then, becomes of his declaration, that they contain the whole truth? And here I was going to stop; but I am led to remark, in general, that Dr. Beecher is in the habit of making reckless declarations. To show this, I will take his lecture on the cause of scepticism. When speaking of the French Revolution and its effect ——

[Here Mr. BRAINERD interposed, and observed that this was not relevant to the case. Dr. Beecher was not on trial for making reckless declarations.]

Dr. WILSON said that he did not care about the introduction of the passage. It would only go to show that the sweeping declarations of Dr. Beecher were intended for popular effect. They must be made either without intention,—and that would argue what Dr. Wilson never should charge upon Dr. Beecher, namely, a want of sense,—or, they must be made, as he had averred, for the purpose of producing popular effect; and that was all he had charged under this head.

Dr. Wilson then read the 4th specification. [See p. 91.]

On this I shall merely say, that when you look at Dr. Beecher's sermons, and then consider the facts in connection with the 3d specification, how can you conclude otherwise that his course exhibits dissimulation?

I shall now close the argument, by referring the court to the

decision of the Synod of Ohio, which was made in reference to these very difficulties; not as they have been occasioned by Dr. Beecher's preaching and publications, but elsewhere, as produced by others holding the same sentiments. The Synod made a record on their minutes, and gave it as an injunction upon all the Presbyteries under their care, that persons using doubtful language, or phrases which were new, and which caused disturbance in the Church, should be subjects of discipline.

In the next place, I shall present to the court Dr. Beecher's creed, as contained in his select system. It consists of eleven articles, and may be found in Dr. Beecher's reply to the *Christian Examiner*. The *Christian Examiner*, let it be remembered, is a Unitarian paper, and the Unitarians claim all the articles of the creed except two. And such was the clearness of the article in which this claim was advanced, so strong and so conclusive were the arguments it contained, that Dr. Beecher was obliged to come out in a long and labored reply. The articles of the creed are these:

——men are free agents; in the possession of such faculties, and placed in such circumstances, as to render it practicable for them to do whatever God requires; reasonable that he should require it; and fit that he should inflict, literally, the entire penalty of disobedience. Such ability is here intended as lays a perfect foundation for government, and for rewards and punishments according to deeds.

And now I ask, Is there here to be found one single distinctive feature which belongs exclusively to that system of doctrine which is taught in our standards? There are, to be sure, sentiments which are held in common; and the last, especially, is received by Arminians, Catholics, Universalists, and almost all other sects, the Unitarians excepted. But here is not one single distinctive feature of the Calvinistic

system. The creed may very appropriately be called a select system, which some of all sects receive, and which some of all sects reject. I will now read Dr. Beecher's note appended to his sermon on this select system.

[MR. BRAINERD here inquired whether Dr. Beecher had set forth these eleven articles as the fundamental principles of Christianity, or as expressing the whole of his own creed.]

DR. WILSON replied, that he did not care whether they contained his entire creed or not. These were the articles as he had given them in his sermon. Dr. Wilson then read the note, as follows:

I choose to call these doctrines the evangelical system, not only because I believe them to be the Gospel, but because no man, or denomination, has held them so exclusively as to render it proper to designate them by the name of an individual or a sect. It is a select system, which some of almost every denomination hold, and some reject; and which ought to be characterized by some general term indicative of the system, as held in all ages and among all denominations of Christians.

To sum up the whole matter: It will be proper for you, as a court, to mark Dr. Beecher's course, as far as it has been exhibited to you by evidence, from its commencement to the present time. It must be evident to all that his course has been marked with vacillation, and has been calculated to excite deep suspicion and long and loud complaint, both in and out of New England; that it has been such as hitherto to elude detection, and escape anything like a trial on its real merits; that one feature which has peculiarly marked it has been the mixture in his publications of truth and error,—just enough truth to make the error with which it is associated most deleterious and deadly to the souls of men. This has n the course adopted by all false teachers in every age of hurch, as well before as since the coming of Christ. Nor

is it strange; for no error could succeed, if it should be presented naked and alone, unless in a system of the most open and abandoned infidelity, or in such lectures as are delivered in Tammany Hall, New York. What has our Lord told us respecting such teachers? He said that they would come in sheep's clothing. And what is sheep's clothing, but an exhibition in part of such truths as none can gainsay or disprove, accompanied by an example of personal conduct with which none can find fault? We have had two individuals in the West,—I refer to Barton W. Stone, and to Mr. Parker, of New Richmond,—who, while they were the most decided errorists of modern times, maintained for thirty years morals of the most exemplary and unimpeachable description. They came in sheep's clothing. And what is Paul's description? He says that with good words and fair speeches they should beguile the hearts of the simple. And, what is very extraordinary, men of this description have ever appeared to be entirely unconscious of their own inconsistent and reckless course. Of this there is not a more impressive example than that of the brilliant and conspicuous Irving. When he had pushed his delusion even to the extreme of professing to speak with new tongues, and after he had been tried and condemned for his false and heretical opinions, he laid a paper on the table of the Presbytery, declaring in the fullest terms his belief in the whole Confession of Faith. Errorists ever appear unconscious of their own character. And how can it be otherwise, when God himself has told us that it would be so? The sentiments of which I complain are not insulated and independent tenets. They form part of a system; and it is a system so connected, that if you adopt one of its leading principles, and possess a logical mind, you will be obliged to follow that principle out, until you

have adopted the whole. For example: suppose you adopt the doctrine of the natural ability of fallen man to do what is good,—his perfect capacity to comply fully with the law and the Gospel of God,—and make faith and repentance the terms on which God will forgive sin, and save the soul. You then necessarily exclude the direct agency of the Holy Spirit upon the heart in quickening those who are dead in sin. You then represent the Spirit, in the work of conversion, merely as being more capable of presenting truth to the mind than a man is. And this is the very illustration given in Ross' treatise, entitled, "Faith according to Common Sense." And as soon as you lay aside the agency of the Spirit in creating a new heart, you get at once upon the system of moral suasion. Then comes an indefinite atonement, through which God can forgive sin on condition of faith and repentance; which repentance and faith the sinner by his own strength is able to exercise, and which he is persuaded to exercise because the Spirit of God is able to present truth in a more luminous manner than a human preacher can do it. Or, to use Ross' illustration, a boy cannot split the log, not owing to any insufficiency in the wedge or the maul, but because he has not strength enough for the task; but when a man comes along, and takes hold of them, the log is immediately riven asunder. This illustration, however, was a bad one on their part, because it implies passivity in regeneration, a point which they deny. Well, as soon as you adopt the indefinite atonement, you cut up by the roots the federative representation of the second Adam; and, when you have done this, consistency will oblige you to go back, and deny the federative representation of the first Adam; and thus you have got to the denial of original sin; and you must say, with Dr. Beecher, that "somehow, in consequence of Adam's fall, all

men sin voluntarily; and that the first sin in every man could have been and ought to have been avoided." Again, take the other side of the proposition, and you run into the system of the Perfectionists. Man is able to keep the whole law. The Spirit so persuades him as to make him willing. And when he is both able and willing, there can, of course, be no sin.

Now, we say that this is "another Gospel;" that it is not the system of truth revealed in the Scriptures; and I am here prepared to say, as the apostle did, without the least bitterness of spirit, and with an earnest desire that God would be pleased to turn men from their darkness and delusion, that if any man preach another Gospel, let him be anathema. The apostolic injunction must be obeyed,— to mark those who cause contentions among Christians, and to avoid them; because, by good words and fair speeches, they beguile the hearts of the simple.

Sir, this is zealously pushed forward. It has already created divisions and distractions throughout the Presbyterian Church. What was once the condition of all the Churches under the care of this Synod? They lived in peace. They acted as brethren. Meetings of the Synod and of the Presbyteries were anticipated as seasons of refreshing. We were all engaged,— not, indeed, to the extent we should have been, in laboring in the Lord's cause. We did, indeed, fall far short of our whole duty, but still we labored together with mutual affection, and our meetings were blessed. And I here say openly, and without fear of contradiction, that we enjoyed happy seasons of religious revival, until they were checked and interrupted by the introduction of this new system. But since this new divinity has entered our bounds, we have had nothing but distraction and disunion. Our revivals have been killed, and our once rejoicing Churches now sit in a

death-like silence. Yes, sir, they are like the mountains of Gilboa, destitute of the dews of heaven; they are like the bones in the valley of vision, dry, very dry. My brethren, you are called upon, as guardians of the purity of the Church, and watchmen upon her walls, to restore that peace and order which she once enjoyed, by putting a check to a system of doctrine which ought, like the idols of the heathen, to be cast with all speed to the moles and to the bats.

And let me tell you now that with this system there can be no compromise. Things which are so utterly contradictory never can be made to coalesce. The old and the new divinity are now engaged in an arduous and desperate struggle. It is like the contest of fire and water. And they must continue to fight until the weaker shall die. And, though this is poetry, it is no fiction. Much will depend on you. The days of white-washing are gone by forever. That party which shall be victorious will maintain the seminary, and control its funds; and that party which is not sustained must go out; for we cannot live together. The Confession of Faith must go down, or the new theology must be put out of doors. Your decision, it is true, will not be final. But, if it shall be made in conformity with the standards of our Church, what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and, even though it should be annulled by men, will, nevertheless, in the end be recognized by the broad seal of the great Master.

The simple question which each of you is bound to put to his own conscience, under each separate charge, in this trial, is simply this: Has this charge been sustained by evidence? and, unless I am greatly deceived indeed, your reply must be in the affirmative. And, if it is, will you acquit this man? '1 you tell him to do so no more? and will you there let !? Be reminded, I pray you, of the cases of Barnes

and Duffield. There a white-washing committee was appointed, who white-washed both parties. In the latter case, the charges were sustained, and the man proved guilty; he was gently advised to offend no more. And, what followed? — Peace? Order? — No; deeper and deeper animosities, and wider and wider divisions, were the natural consequences; and must continue to be the consequences, until the decisions of church-courts are made so clear with respect to the infliction of censure that they will effectually guard against the inroads of heresy, that they shall strike terror into the breast of every heresiarch, and shall rescue every inexperienced novice from his *facilis descensus Averni*,— the easy road to perdition.

I have taxed my ingenuity to discover what defence could possibly be set up by the accused; and I confess myself utterly unable so much as to conjecture. This may be owing to my want of imagination, and of ingenuity; and Dr. Beecher will very probably show something that was far beyond my powers of imagination to anticipate; and when his powerful intellect shall have demonstrated that white is black, that two and two do not make four, then, and not till then, may he expect an acquittal.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

Dr. BEECHER said that before commencing his defence he wished to adduce some additional testimony in reference to the question how much of his capital in character he had lost before he left New England; and he adduced it in order to meet the anonymous and personal letters which had been read by Dr. Wilson, as published by Mr. Rand, the Edwardean, and others.

Dr. WILSON said he had no objection, so far as it testimony; but, at present, Dr. Beecher himself stood on side, and Mr. Rand on the other, as to the question of Beecher's capital in reputation. He presumed the Pres tery was competent to decide between them.

PROFESSOR STOWE was thereupon sworn, and testified follows:

According to the best of my knowledge, Dr. Beech reputation and influence in New England were never great, nor did he ever enjoy so extensively the confidence the religious community, as at the time when he received accepted the invitation to come to Cincinnati.

To the best of my knowledge, he had then but *three* o and declared assailants of public character:

1. Thomas Whittemore, editor of the *Universa Trumpet;* a paper uniformly marked with the worst fe ures of the most ferocious kind of Universalism.

2. Moses Thatcher, editor of the *New England T graph;* a paper devoted to the most ultra kind of Hopki ianism, which makes God the direct efficient cause of ev sinful thought, emotion, word and deed of every sinful cr ture in the universe; and to the most ultra kind of indepe ency in church government, which he carried to such extreme that the Hopkinsians themselves, with Dr. Emm at their head, made a public disclaimer and condemnation his views and proceedings in matters of church discipli Mr. Thatcher had had difficulties in his own church, wh were divided against him in a council of which Dr. Beec was a prominent member.

3. Asa Rand, editor of the *Volunteer*, and afterwards *well Observer*. I was for many years acquainted w

ıving fitted for college in the parish of which he
and boarding next door to him; and afterwards
r about a year, the same office-room with him
an editor. He is a man of great industry,
and other valuable traits of character; but,
liar habits of thought, and feeling, and action,
do justice to such a man as Dr. Beecher. He
to Dr. Beecher's theology, being himself an
ıe taste and exercise scheme of Dr. Burton. He
Beecher's mode of preaching, being strenuously
ious excitement and strong appeals to the feel-
he had given decided proof many years before,
bation of Dr. Payson's mode of preaching, in
rhood he was settled, and whose sister he had
ides, Dr. Beecher was uniformly successful in
nstantly rising in influence, while Mr. Rand
unsuccessful, and his influence was continually
hose acquainted with the circumstances will
nd's statement and innuendoes with great abate-
n any distrust of his moral integrity, but from
f the medium through which facts would pre-
s to his mind. To the best of my knowledge,
and complaints alluded to in Mr. Rand's letter
were confined to a very small number of per-
ot by any means extend to the great body of
the old-school party in New England, or the
and leading men in that party. Of the men
o one stands higher than Dr. Woods, of An-
in his house part of the time while I was at
from that time to this he has always treated
indness, affection, and confidence of a father,
ays loved, and trusted, and consulted him as

such. While deliberating whether I should come to Lane Seminary, Dr. Woods frequently, and with the deep feeling characteristic of him, expressed to me his affectionate confidence in Dr. Beecher, and his earnest wish for the success of the seminary. The same feelings were expressed to me by Dr. Woods, and the same kind wishes reiterated, when I visited him at his house in September last.

Dr. Tyler is well known to the public as the chief antagonist of the New Haven theology. He stands to me in the relation of a father and confidential friend. I have been for years a member of his family, and his children are my brothers and sisters. When I was deliberating about coming to Lane Seminary, Dr. Tyler expressed the same feelings with Dr. Woods, and, perhaps, with still greater distinctness. He has frequently said to me, in conversation, "I always loved Dr. Beecher, and have entire confidence in him," or words to that effect. It is my full conviction that the feelings of Dr. Woods and Dr. Tyler towards Dr. Beecher are the feelings of the great body of the religious community in New England, even among the strong opponents of what is called new divinity men and measures. The Congregational ministers of Maine and New Hampshire, particularly, are almost entirely of this class, and I never saw one that did not love and confide in Dr. Beecher; and I am personally acquainted, I think, with a majority of the ministers in both those states. The pamphlet by an Edwardean, I am sure, does not express the feeling of even the old-school party in New England. I never heard Dr. Woods or Dr. Tyler say a word in favor of it. This pamphlet was strongly disapproved by men of all parties; and the author, as far as I know, has, to this day, never dared to avow himself: and, from my connection with opposers of New Haven theology, I think I should have

known it, if he had. It was everywhere regarded in New England as a great and heroic sacrifice, on the part of Dr. Beecher, to give up the advantages of the reputation and public influence he had then acquired, and to go to a distant field, where he must gain reputation anew, and work his way like a young man.

Rev. F. Y. VAIL was then sworn, and his testimony is as follows:

I have, during the last four years, visited the churches and ministers extensively in New York and the States of New England, in obtaining funds for the Lane Seminary. I have great confidence in stating that the association of Dr. Beecher's name with this institution was one of the most important means of securing the funds requisite for its endowment; and that both ministers and churches, wherever I have visited, have, with scarcely an exception, manifested the most unshaken confidence in Dr. Beecher. The general impression seemed to pervade the Congregational and Presbyterian churches with which I have had intercourse, that the removal of no other man would be so great a blessing to this important section of our country as that of Dr. Beecher; and it was with much regret that they were called to give up his important and valuable services in New England.

Rev. ARTEMAS BULLARD was next sworn, and testified as follows:

For nearly five years I was agent of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union, before Dr. Beecher was called to the West, and for several years a member of Dr. Beecher's church in Boston. I have visited nearly every Orthodox Congregational minister in Massachusetts, and a great por-

tion of all in the New England States. Among all these I know the reputation of Dr. Beecher had been uniformly rising till he left. There was no minister in New England so uniformly dreaded and hated by Unitarians and Universalists as Dr. Beecher. I was in the church-meeting when the question was discussed whether Dr. Beecher should be dismissed to come here. The main reason urged why he should not come, by members of the Church, was, that he never had so much influence in the orthodox community as then.

Dr. WILSON. — What is the standard of orthodoxy among the clergymen you denominate orthodox?

Answer. — Those are denominated orthodox, in New England, who are opposed to Unitarian sentiments.

Dr. WILSON. — Have they any written or published creed, which forms a bond of union among them, as our system of doctrine?

Ans. — Nothing like the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church.

Dr. WILSON. — Is not every congregation, in respect to its articles of faith, independent, claiming the right of forming its own creed and covenant?

Ans. — I believe they are.

Dr. WILSON. — Was the creed and covenant of Dr. Beecher's church similar to that which has been extracted from the sermon on "Faith once Delivered to the Saints"?

Ans. — I never compared the two.

Dr. WILSON. — In what estimation did the orthodox ministers of New England hold that sermon?

Ans. — I don't recollect ever hearing that mentioned as distinct from other sermons.

Dr. WILSON. — Has Mr. Rand, in his letter to Dr.

Beecher, misrepresented or misstated Dr. Beecher's connections with Dr. Taylor and Mr. Finney?

Ans. — I don't know what was in that letter.

Dr. WILSON. — Why did the Unitarians hate Dr. Beecher, when the *Christian Examiner*, in a review of his sermon on "Faith once Delivered," &c., claimed the sentiments as their own?

Ans. — They hated and dreaded him because they supposed that he was the most powerful and efficient opponent of Unitarian sentiments. His labors in Boston were specially directed to counteract Unitarian sentiments.

Dr. WILSON. — Do you not know it as a historical fact that Unitarians greatly rejoice at the progress of what is called new theology?

Ans. — They do not, if you mean that Dr. Beecher's doctrines are new theology.

Mr. BRAINERD. — Are the orthodox ministers and churches of New England Calvinists?

Ans. — Yes, so far as they follow any man.

Dr. BEECHER. — In what estimation do ministers and churches hold the Assembly's Shorter Catechism?

Ans. — The orthodox churches, universally, consider it the best epitome of the doctrines of the Bible. The families are taught that Catechism as universally as they are in the Presbyterian Church.

Dr. WILSON. — Do they teach the Shorter Catechism as it is mutilated and altered by the American Sabbath School Union, or as it exists in the standards of our Church?

Ans. — I never knew any of the American Sabbath School Union Catechism in New England.

Mr. BULLARD confirmed the testimony of Prof. Stowe,

respecting Mr. Rand, and the editors of the *Telegraph*, *Trumpet*, and others.

Prof. STOWE called up again.

Dr. WILSON. — Has Mr. Rand, in his letter to Dr. Beecher, part of which has been read before this Presbytery, misrepresented or misstated Dr. Beecher's coöperation with Dr. Taylor and Mr. Finney in Boston?

Ans. — I cannot give a simple affirmation or negation to the question; but must say that the statements of the letter are unfair, inasmuch as they represent Dr. Beecher as entirely concurring in, and responsible for, all the sentiments and measures of Dr. Taylor and Mr. Finney; and the disclaimer which he asserts of such intention does not at all correct the general impression which the letter always makes. [Read and approved.]

Dr. BEECHER now rose, and addressed the court in nearly the following terms:

I have fallen very unexpectedly, at my time of life, on the necessity of getting testimony to support my theological and clerical character. But, since I am called to it, I may as well make thorough work; and I shall, therefore, request the clerk to read a letter addressed to me by the Rev. Dr. Greene, two years previous to my coming to this place. The letter is dated 31st March, 1828, and is as follows:

Philadelphia, March 31, 1828.

REV. AND DEAR SIR: This, Sir, will be handed you by two members of the Fifth Presbyterian Church of this city, who have been delegated to consult you on the subject of a call to the pastoral charge of that Church. They need no assistance from me in explaining their views, or in showing the importance of the situation to which they and the people they represent have invited you. My design, in writing this note, is to say, that, *having presided* at the meeting of the congregation at which this call was

voted, I can and do assure you that the most perfect unanimity and apparent cordiality marked the whole proceeding. Public notice of the meeting had been fully given on the preceding Lord's day; the assembly was large and solemn: and there was neither a dissenting voice, nor, so far as I judge, a neutral individual, when the vote was taken.

I have only to add, that if you shall find it to be your duty to become an inhabitant of this city, and a member of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, you shall, if I am spared to witness it, be received and treated in the most respectful manner, and with true fraternal affection.

Your friend and brother in the Gospel of our precious Redeemer,

ASHBEL GREENE.

Rev. Dr. BEECHER.

Let it be remembered that this letter was written by Dr. Greene after he had commended, as Calvinistic, the sermon in which I advanced the doctrine of man's natural ability; for which, in the opinion of my brother Wilson, I ought to be turned out of the Church, and, of course, Dr. Greene also.

I will now request the clerk to read another letter addressed to me, about the same time, from the Rev. Dr. Miller. This is dated April 2, 1828, and is in the following words:

Princeton, April 2, 1828.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER: Before this letter reaches your hands, you will have been apprized that the church of which our friend Dr. Skinner was lately the pastor, has given you an *unanimous call* to become their minister.

Some are disposed to smile at this measure, as a sort of desperate effort at *retaliation*, for robbing Philadelphia of Dr. Skinner. Others view it as a plan by no means hopeless. But ALL, so far as I know, in this region, would *most cordially rejoice* in the success of the application, and hail your arrival in Philadelphia as an event most devoutly to be wished by all the friends of Zion within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church.

My dear brother, I beg, with all the earnestness that I am capable of feeling or uttering, that you will not either lightly consider or hastily reject this call. I do seriously believe that, however painful the step (of removal to Philadelphia) might be, both to the friends of religion in Massachusetts and to yourself, the residue of your days could not possibly be disposed of (so far as human views can go) in a manner so much calcu-

lated to *unite* the friends of Christ in the South and West with those at the East, and to introduce a new era of *harmony, love* and *cöoperation*, in the American churches.

It is not only a matter of immense importance that the individual church in Philadelphia which gives you this call should be supplied with a pastor wise, pious, peaceful, prudent and acceptable, as far as possible, to all parties; but, if *you* will come in to that place, I am most deeply persuaded that you will have an opportunity of a most happy and reviving influence all around you, to a degree which very few men in our country have ever had; that you will be likely, humanly speaking, to bring together feelings and efforts which are now widely separated; and, in fact, of giving a new impulse to all those great plans which I know to be near your heart.

By removing to Philadelphia, — unless I utterly miscalculate, — you would not be likely to subduct very essentially from your usefulness in Massachusetts. You might still, by means of writing and occasional visits, continue to do *there* a large portion of what you now do; while your influence and usefulness in the Presbyterian Church, from New England to New Orleans, might, and probably would, be increased *ten-fold*. I have no doubt that, by your acceptance of the station to which you are called, your opportunity for doing good in the American churches would be *doubled*, if not *quadrupled*, at a stroke.

Say not that these things are matters of human calculation. They are so; and yet, I think, the book of God, and human experience, furnish an abundant foundation for them to rest upon. The truth is, we want nothing, for the benefit of our eighteen hundred churches (next to the sanctifying Spirit of God), so much as an individual in Philadelphia (our ecclesiastical metropolis) who should be active, energetic, untiring, comprehensive in his plans, and firm and unmoved in his purposes and efforts. Will you not cast yourself on the Lord's strength and faithfulness, and come and help us to unite all our force in one mighty effort, in the name of our heavenly King, to promote his cause *at home and abroad?* With the cordiality of a brother, and the freedom of an old friend, I conjure you, when such an open door is set before you, not to refuse to enter it. As to your reception among us, I hope I need not say that it would be *universally* with *glad hearts* and *open arms!* May the Lord direct and bless you! Sincerely your friend and brother,

SAMUEL MILLER.

have reason to believe that Dr. Miller, at the time he to *this* letter, had read all my publications but the last;

e and Dr. Greene ought to go out of the Church

other letter, of a somewhat later date; and, now holding up myself by certificates of character, I iis, too, may be read. It is from the Rev. Dr. ı.

ON here inquired whether this was the same letter Beecher had produced at the last meeting of Pres-

HER replied in the affirmative.

ON then inquired of the Moderator whether Dr. not said at the time that the explanation which on) had made in respect to it was satisfactory.

HER said that the explanation was satisfactory pected the sermon on native depravity, and no

N said he had no objection to the letter being he could make the same explanation again.

ER replied that he would not make the same because he (Dr. Beecher) should make that ception. The letter now to be read had been a committee of the Board of Trustees of Lane the church to which Dr. Beecher belonged, at as invited to come here. It is dated on the 5th 31, and is in the following terms:

Cincinnati, Feb. 5, 1831.

Church and Congregation:

THREN AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: As a committee of the heological Seminary, the undersigned are called upon to ehalf of that institution. [The letter proceeds to state rom a general view of the wants of the West, for the erec- ary, &c. It then proceeds:]

Having presented this general view of the character, claims and prospects, of our seminary, permit us, dear brethren and friends, to specify a few particular reasons why Dr. Beecher is called, by Divine Providence, and the great interests of the Church, to this institution.

1. The strongest convictions of many of our wisest and best men, east and west of the mountains, that the great interests of the Church, and especially of the West, require Dr. Beecher's labors at the head of our seminary. A large number of our ministerial and lay brethren have expressed their deliberate conviction that the enterprise of building up a great *central theological institution* at Cincinnati, — soon to become the great Andover or Princeton of the West, and to give character to hundreds and thousands of ministers which may issue from it, — is one of the most important and responsible in which the Church is ever called to engage; and that no man in our country, in many important respects, is so well fitted to give character, energy and success, to such an institution, as Dr. Beecher. Never has the presentation of a similar subject excited more deep and lively interest, and called forth a more general and cordial approbation among the friends of religion at the East and the West, than by the announcement of Dr. Beecher's appointment as our president and theological professor, and the consequent prospect of our securing ample funds for the endowment of the institution. This voice of public opinion, and of the ministers of the Church of Christ, we think is to be regarded as no unimportant indication of the will of Providence in this matter.

2. Dr. Beecher's well-known standing and well-known reputation at the West, as well as the East, will make his labors of incalculable importance to our seminary. * * * Nor is it a consideration of small importance, that Dr. Beecher's habits of rigorous exercise and labor would exert a most powerful practical influence in giving increased reputation and popularity among the community generally.

3. * * * The Church is now, doubtless, entering into the most eventful period of her most glorious enterprise, in speedily sending the Gospel to every creature, and subjugating the world to the Prince of Peace. To accomplish this great work, we want, indeed, hundreds and thousands of additional laborers; but we need, more especially, in the character of those who come forth, to see men of higher and holier enterprise than most of us who have entered the ministry. Do we not need, and must we not have, [illegible] the millennium is ever to come, men of evangelical and deep-toned piety; [illegible]ed into the spirit of revivals, — possessing clear and discriminating [illegible] divine truth, — despising the compromising spirit of worldly pru-

dence, — fearless and firm in their attacks upon the strong-holds of infidelity and the devil; men who should be fully up to, or rather far in advance of, the spirit of the age, in Christian enterprise and action, and men whose whole souls are absorbed in the great work of converting the world? And how, dear brethren and friends, can we so effectually rear up such men, as by putting them under the instruction of one whose spirit shall become theirs, and who, without invidious comparisons, has no superior, in the characteristics now mentioned, in this or any other portion of Christendom?

When we reflect how much has been accomplished, and is now doing, for the salvation of our country and the world, by one such spirit as Beecher, we feel that the Church will be deprived of his most important services and influence, unless he is permitted to impress the important lineaments of his character upon the rising ministers of the West.

4. The influence which Dr. Beecher would be able to exert in our city and the surrounding country, as a preacher, renders his labors at this point peculiarly important and desirable. It is well known that Cincinnati now contains about thirty thousand inhabitants, &c. * * * While training up young men for the ministry where their influence on the city will be powerfully felt, the contiguity of our seminary to the city will enable the doctor to preach the Gospel to the population as extensively and powerfully, and, we doubt not, as successfully, as at any former period of his ministry. Who, then, would not rejoice to see Dr. Beecher double his influence and usefulness, by giving character and prominence to a great theological seminary, while powerfully wielding at the same time the sword of truth against the augmenting powers of darkness in our city and surrounding country?

5. The deep and general interest which would be awakened at the East, in behalf of the West, by the removal of Dr. Beecher to our seminary, constitutes, in our estimation, an urgent reason for his acceptance of our call. We all thank God and take courage, in view of the interest which has been excited, and the effort made at the East in behalf of the West within the last few years. * * &c. What, then, do we ask, can be done now for the West, &c.? We answer, let hundreds and thousands of pious and intelligent families from the East, with the spirit of missionaries, scatter themselves over all the towns and villages of our great valley, without delay. * * * Do you ask how the interest, necessary to bring them on the ground, can be excited? We reply, let it be known that Dr. Beecher is really going into this field of labor himself; that, in entering upon the

work, he is willing to lead the way; and, as he passes over the Alleghanies, let him pass through the old states, and beat up for volunteers in this truly Christian crusade against the infidels. And, when the East feels sufficient interest in the salvation of the West to send to her aid, not merely a few of the young and inexperienced subalterns, but some of her most distinguished generals, it will be felt that the warfare in which we are engaged is one which must soon give liberty and happiness, or despotism and ruin, to our country; nor will men nor resources be wanting to achieve a speedy and triumphant victory.

The last reason we shall mention for Dr. Beecher's connection with our institution is, that the security of the funds pledged on this condition, and the consequent existence and prosperity of the seminary, depend upon it. * * * The professorships, amounting, in all, to fifty thousand dollars, are nearly secured, on condition that Dr. Beecher becomes our professor, and that we at the West raise from ten thousand to twenty thousand dollars more for buildings, &c. These funds, thus liberally offered to us, are to be given on account of the special confidence which the donors place in Dr. Beecher, to preside over and give character and success to our seminary, &c. By a Committee of the Board:

J. L. Wilson,
J. Gallaher,
F. Y. Vail,
} Signed by me, at their request,
F. Y. Vail.

It is proper I should state that Dr Wilson declared that he had not seen my sermon on the Native Character of Man at the time this letter was written; but he certainly had a full knowledge of my sentiments on the subject of natural ability so long before as the year 1817, when he had a conversation with me on that subject.

Dr. Beecher, having no further testimony to adduce, now entered upon his defence, and spoke substantially as follows:

I have two causes of embarrassment in entering upon this subject. I know that I am liable to be regarded as a stranger, thrust in upon the quiet and comfort of a venerable patriarch, who had borne the heat and burden of the day; and vexing

ı soul by obtruding upon him my own novel
heresies. And, in the second place, I am also
may be said that ever since I came here there
hing but quarrelling in the "churches of the
ıat so it will be all the time I stay here." To
ɜr is, that as to my being an intruder, this good
lf called me to come here, and in so doing acted,
, in obedience to God's high command; and, in
what I understood to be the manifested will of
ne. I am not an intruder. I left all that man
in respectful estimation and the sympathies of
l came to this place, expecting the warm bosom
ng arms of this, my venerable brother. All I
ıat my reception was not such as I had antici-
et exceedingly that I am compelled by a sense
ır to the manner in which I was received and
. And here let me say, that if this matter had
elf alone, as a private individual, no mortal
'e heard a word upon the subject from my lips.
my own. My character and influence belong
if I have not done evil, I have no right to per-
suspected. And, if my brother, with ever so
, has done me wrong, if he has broken the arm
as a man associated with an important public
with the Christian cause generally, it is due
ınd to the responsible station I occupy, that I
r to save myself, although the mode is most
ıs I fear it will prove to him. I would thank
ıad a few extracts from the paper called the
ligious periodical published in this city. The
ıcribed with the initials J. L. W.

lty occurring in turning to the extracts, Dr.

Beecher waived his call for the reading of them, and proceeded with the body of his defence.]

If Dr. Wilson, after having invited me to settle in this city, became possessed of information which led him to believe that I ought not to accept the call which had been put into my hands, Christian courtesy and sincerity required of him that he should inform me of such change in his opinion, and frankly avow the intended change of his course in regard to me. If he had done so, I would have gone to him and wept upon his bosom, in view of such openness and integrity. But he never did it. When he opposed my admission into the Presbytery, I expressed my confidence that I could explain my views and doctrinal opinions satisfactorily to him; and we had an interlocutory meeting of Presbytery for that purpose. But it did not result as I had expected. After that, I told Dr. Wilson repeatedly that he misunderstood my views in respect to original sin. For I perfectly well knew that I held opinions on that subject which he thought I did not hold; and, on the contrary, that I did not hold certain other opinions which he thought I did hold. And I asked him whether it would not be better for us mutually to explain, and endeavor to come to a satisfactory understanding, than at our time of life to agitate the community with controversy, and run the risk of breaking up the peace of the Church. Dr. Wilson replied, that when men had reached our period of life their opinions were sufficiently known; and he has never permitted me to enjoy the opportunity of one word of explanation, from that time to this. Now, I freely admit that he had a perfect right to change his opinion in regard to me, and the expediency of my settlement here. But he had not a right, in utter recklessness of my [illegible]onal feelings, and the impairing of my ministerial useful-[illegible]o drag me before the public, at my time of life, after I

ɔd and the Church so many years, and must soon
my account. It was wrong, very wrong, in my
ar me up after this sort.

ies charged upon me are not recent. I am not
ɔstasy from opinions once received and professed,
ion in the introduction of notions till now unheard
trines I maintain existed in the Presbyterian
e I was born. I was ordained, on examination,
ession of that same faith for holding and pub-
I am now to be tried as a heretic. In the
ich ordained me there were men of the old and
ien called the new divinity (though it was thirty-
, and the vote for my ordination was unanimous;
ɔordingly ordained by the Presbytery of Long
not say that I subscribed the Confesssion of
ime, under the declaration that it contained the
le truth, and nothing but the truth. I was not
at time to say so. I had not then studied it
ad I been enough charged with heresy, to give
y investigation of its meaning. I signed it, as
ters in the Church sign it, as containing, "the
ɔtrine taught in the holy Scriptures;" and I
ncerely.

es on which I am accused are not matters of
ical speculation; but they are truths of which
ary to make a constant use in the performance
l and ministerial duties; and which, of all
found most efficacious in producing conviction
conversion of souls to God. It has no doubt
to guard against the perversion of these doc-
in regard to all other doctrines: for, as Horace
vessel be not clean, whatever you pour into it

will turn to vinegar." But ministers, surely, are not responsible for all that perversion of the truth they preach of which others are often guilty. I do not regard myself as standing here as an insulated individual suspected of heresy. I do not believe I am suspected of heresy, or ever have been, to any considerable extent. I do not feel as if I stood here alone, to be sifted and scrutinized, to see whether I am worthy of a standing in the Church, or ought to be excommunicated as a heretic. I am one of many who believe the same doctrines that I do. And if any man shall be enabled to make the truths of the Gospel tell with greater effect on the hearts and consciences of sinners than I have made them tell, I will bless God for it. No man shall be envied by me because his ministry has been more successful than my own. My heart, I trust, will ever be a stranger to any such feelings.

The charges against me are heresy, slander, and hypocrisy; but they all turn on the charge of heresy. For, if the doctrines I teach are according to the Word of God and the Confession of Faith, then I am neither a slanderer nor a hypocrite. It is said that I have professed to agree with the standards of our Church, and yet know that profession to be false; while I, on the contrary, say that I do concur with those standards as I understand them. If I have mistaken their meaning, still the charge is not sustained. Ah! Sir, there must be some eye which can look in here [laying his hand on his bosom], or there must be some clear evidence outside, before it may be said that I have told a lie. I said that I believed, on further inquiry, and I believe it now, that on the points involved in this controversy our Confession of Faith contains the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If I was guilty of hypocrisy in making that declaration before the Synod, I now repeat the offence. I may find out that on some points

ıken his meaning; and, if I do, I will say so.
ıest in my past and present declarations.
of my alleged heresy respect,
foundation of moral obligation; or the natural
n as a free agent, and subject of moral govern-
r the Gospel.
ıoral inability of man, as a sinner entirely de-
anything which includes evangelical obedience
ırdon and eternal life; as consisting entirely in his
ate, voluntary aversion from God and the Gospel.
rigin of this moral impotency; or the relation
n and his posterity, and the effecton them of

roperties of all personal sin as voluntary.
ficient and instrumental cause, and the conse-
eneration.
ıature of Christian character as complex or

ɔly, then, to these several charges of doctrinal
:t what I have believed, and have taught on
rough all my public ministry, is neither heresy
is in accordance with the Word of God and the
Faith.
eply is, that if in any respect they differ from
lecided to be the true exposition of the Confes-
hey include nothing at variance with the funda-
of the system of doctrine it contains; and are
:haracterized the members of the Presbyterian
the beginning, and have been recognized in
s not inconsistent with subscription to the Con-
honest and honorable standing in the Church.
ceed, it will be necessary to say a word about

creeds, and subscription to creeds, and the rights of private interpretation and free inquiry.

1. And, first, they are not a substitute for the Bible, but a concise epitome of what is believed to be the meaning of the Bible.

2. They originate from the discrepancies of human opinion, and the necessity of united views within certain limits, in order to complacency, confidence and practical coöperation. Generally they do not aim at a verbal and exact and universal agreement; but so far as affords evidence of Christian character, and lays a foundation for united action. The attempt of universal and exact conformity must split the Church up into small and consequently feeble and impotent departments, and of course weaken her associated power and moral influence.

Whatever differences of opinion do not destroy the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and are consistent with fellowship and coöperation, may be tolerated; and hence you find that in proportion as you insist upon specific accuracy you render your denomination small and insignificant, in comparison with the numbers and the wealth, and the amount of influence and moral power in society, which it ought to embrace; and thus prevent that momentum for good which the collected body ought to exert. The true policy, and that which has been pursued, is to push the requirement of conformity only so far as will enable the masses of men combined under the same profession of truth to be large and weighty, to have power and effect in giving a healthy tone to public sentiment, and carry forward the great designs which the Gospel was intended to accomplish in the world.

3. Churches of every name are voluntary associations, and, on the principles of civil and religious liberty, have a right *gree* in respect to the doctrine and discipline by which

they will promote their own edification. The exclusion is no encroachment on the rights of others. Those who differ from me in sentiment have no right to be judges of my liberty, or to encroach on my comfort, edification or useful action; but may seek their own edification with others who agree with them in their own way. This is the origin of different denominations, and indispensable in order to practical and efficient action.

4. The exposition of our Confession of Faith appertains, of necessity, in the first instance, to those who subscribe it, and are bound by it. Each subscriber must, for himself, attach some definite import to the terms, and all have an equal right to their own interpretation in the first instance, and no individual has any authority to decide, efficaciously, in respect to his brother, what is the plain and obvious sense; but, in cases of difference, attended with inconvenience, it is to be referred to the higher judicatories, and their decision settles the construction,—just as every man judges for himself of the laws, and of his own rights of property, until discrepant claims demand a reference to the courts for an authoritative exposition of the law. The decision of the highest judicatory is the meaning of the Bible according to the intent of those who agree to walk together. I certainly have no right, in the exercise of my philosophy, or biblical exposition, or free inquiry, to set it aside. If I change my opinions so as to interfere with the bond of union, it is my right to leave the Church; but I have no right by my liberty to make inroads on the peace and edification of others.

In respect to the right of private interpretation, in the first instance, I presume I must have misunderstood my brother Wilson when he says the Confession is not to be explained. That is popery. The papists have no right of private judg-

ment. They must believe as the Pope and council believe, and may believe no otherwise. They are forbidden to exercise their own understanding, and must receive words and doctrines in the sense prescribed and prepared for them. I cannot suppose my brother so holds; but that when he subscribes the Confession, he subscribes to what, at the time, he understands to be its meaning. Who else is to judge for him? Is the Pope to be called in? Is he to ask a General Council what the Confession means? Does he not look at it with his own eyes, and interpret it with his own understanding? But, as I understand my brother, he insists that there is to be no explanation, but that every expression of doctrinal sentiment is to be placed side by side with the Confession, and measured by it: just as you would put two tables side by side, to see if they are of the same size. You are to try the sermon and the Confession by the ear, and see if they sound alike. If they do not, the sermon is heretical, and the author a heretic. Can this be his meaning?

It is admitted that the Church is a voluntary association. None are obliged to join it. But, under affinity of views and sentiments, a number of individuals come together to form themselves into one body. How are they to find out what opinions they do hold? It must be by giving an account of what each man understands to be religious truth revealed from God. If they have no standard, they proceed to form one; or, if one has been formed, they look over it together to see whether they agree with it, and if they do so agree, they make this standard the symbol of their faith, and thus become affiliated with other churches holding the same opinions. I admit that when they have thus examined, explained, and assented to a common standard, they are bound by it; and if any one alters his opinion afterwards to such an extent that the community

becomes dissatisfied,— to such an extent as to break the bond of union, and be unable any longer to walk with his brethren, — he must withdraw; or, if he refuses to withdraw, he must be put out. In joining the Presbyterian Church, each individual member — unless he comes in as an ignoramus, without knowing what he professes — does explain her standards for himself. He must do it, and he has a right to do it, unless his joining the Church means nothing and professes nothing. If it does mean anything, it must mean to him what he understands it to mean; and of this he must, in the first instance, be himself the judge. This is the sixth time I have endeavored to explain my meaning on this subject; and I have been constantly told that I am teaching Independency. I deny that it is Independency, and insist that it is Presbyterianism and common sense. I say that each minister and each member has as good a right to his own exposition of the common standard as another has; and so I told my brother Wilson. I have as good a right to call you a heretic, because your exposition of the Confession does not agree with my view of it, as you have to call me a heretic, because my understanding of the Confession does not agree with yours. You say that I am a heretic according to the plain and obvious meaning of our standards. But your "plain and obvious meaning" is not my "plain and obvious meaning;" and who is to be umpire between us? The constitution has provided one. My brother Wilson and I must go to the Presbytery. I have no right to traduce my brother, and call him a heretic, on the authority of my private personal interpretation of an instrument we both profess to embrace; nor has he any right, before I have been heard and judged by competent authority, to vilify my character, to attack my good name, to drag me into the public prints, and to use his long-established and

broadly-extended influence to bring up a fog of suspicion around me. For, what is the character of a minister of Jesus Christ? It is like the character of a female, liable to be tainted and ruined by the breath of slander. What is more natural to mankind than suspicion? How ready men are to entertain an uncharitable suggestion, or an evil report, come from what source it may! But, when suggestions not only, but direct assertions, proceed not from an obscure or suspected source, but come from years and experience, and high standing and wide-spread influence, what stranger can come and hope to stand before it? In the form of responsible accusation it might be met; but who can stand before the force of SLANDER?

Sir, I made no statements about a loss of reputation; I simply told the truth in respect to what this my brother has done, and the manner in which he treated me, after having first invited me into a strange place. I came here on his invitation, an entire stranger: and, instead of receiving me into the open arms of brotherly affection; instead of welcoming and sustaining and strengthening me, as a fellow-laborer in a common cause; instead of conciliating the public confidence; instead of soothing, and comforting, and seeking to encourage and warm my heart, in a great and arduous undertaking, in an untried field,—he did what in him lay to weaken my hands, to discourage my heart, and to multiply a thousand-fold those difficulties which were inseparable from my situation, and thus to thwart every good and holy end for which I believed that God had called me into this Western world. He had a perfect right, as I have freely admitted, on per evidence, to change the good opinion he had at first rtained of me; but, then, he should have come to me in kness, he should have taken me by the hand, and he

should have said to me: "My brother, I have changed my opinion in respect to your doctrinal views. I believe them to be essentially erroneous; and I must, in the discharge of a good conscience,"—do what? Go to the newspapers? assail you before the public? represent you as a heretic? cut up your influence? tie your hands from doing good? No; I must "bring you to the Presbytery. I must prefer charges against you, and I must have a decision in respect to the opinions you hold." Had he done this,—had my brother met me so,—I would have honored him, I would have wept upon his bosom for his brotherly frankness, blended with unblenching integrity.

And now, as to what has been said about perpetual quarrels in this Presbytery, I deny the fact. We have had no quarrels. There has not an unkind word passed between my brother Wilson and myself, nor have I any knowledge that he entertains towards me the least personal animosity; although I admit that when two walk so contrary to each other, they are in danger of it. Our differences are Ecclesiastical only; and I am always wounded when I hear it said that we have quarrelled. When I came here and perceived that ministerial disputation had got into the public papers, my whole influence was exerted to silence the paper controversy; and it was done. And, although there was much in the opposing paper that was grievous to be borne; although advantage was taken of the prejudices which prevailed in the West against men coming from the Eastern part of the Union; and although strenuous efforts were employed to stir up that feeling, and direct it against myself and my ministry; and although broad caricatures were given of the doctrines I held and openly taught,—I never wrote so much as a line or a word in reply; but, when I discovered that the chafing of mind

inevitably produced by these things was finding its way into my church,— when I saw the fire rapidly spreading, and like to break out, and to embroil my brother's people and mine in open animosities,— my friends know that I prepared and preached two sermons on the obligation of Christian meekness; and they can testify that the effort was blessed of God, and that there was a great calm. It was, to be sure, impossible but that some excitement should exist, when the ministers of the two churches stood in such an attitude toward each other; but from that time the amount was very small and inconsiderable; and the rumor that we, in this city, were together by the ears, contending and fighting and quarrelling, was false and unfounded. All who are present can bear me witness that no such spirit prevailed. The people were quiet, the ministers were personally courteous; all was visible peace until the time came round for the Presbytery to assemble. But no sooner was it met, than the angels might weep. Brotherly confidence had fled. That sweet and fraternal harmony, which ever ought to mark the gatherings of Christ's ministerial servants, was gone. The breath of the Almighty was not upon us. The saints were not refreshed; sinners were not converted. Our coming together was not for the better, but always for the worse. But now I pray God that the result of this examination may be such as to put an end forever to this state of things; that it may issue in reëstablishing our mutual confidence in each other's soundness and integrity; or, if I am a heretic, that the fact may be proved, and I may go to my own place.

But, to return to the question respecting the right of private interpretation. If two ministers do not agree in their understanding of the Confession of Faith, let them not fend, and call hard names, and bite and devour each other,

but let them go before the Presbytery, and, if not satisfied there, let them go to the Synod; and, if the sentence of the Synod cannot quiet the minds, let them carry up the question to the General Assembly, and then the man who is wrong, and perseveres in being wrong, must go out of the Church. We are not without a remedy. The constitution has provided for us a competent tribunal. The ministers who differ come before that tribunal on equal ground; the cause is heard, and the question settled; and he who will not submit to the sentence must leave the body. It is, as I said, just like the rights of property. Two men think that they own a certain portion of lands or goods, and both suppose that they have good and valid reasons for that opinion; but, instead of reviling each, or coming to blows, they take their difference before the court, and each has a right to carry it up by appeal, till he reaches the tribunal of last resort; and there the matter is settled. Now, I hope that on this subject I shall never be misunderstood again. I have done my best to make my meaning plain; and, if I am still misunderstood, I must despair of ever being able to remove the misunderstanding. This is my sixth public effort to do so. If this does not succeed, I must give up the attempt.

The question now at issue turns, then, upon an exposition of the Confession of Faith, not merely as a human formula, but as our admitted epitome of what the Bible teaches. I am charged with a fundamental departure from the true intent of the Confession. I claim that I understand and interpret it truly; or that, if there be any variation, it effects only such points of difference as have in every form been decided to be consistent with edification and an honest subscription and an honorable standing in the Church. The Confession is not a mere human composition. The statement,

indeed, is made by man; but it is the statement of what God has said, and is to us who receive it as God's word. Dr. Wilson has said that we are bound to abide by it *so far* as it is consistent with God's Word; but we have settled that, in receiving it as the symbol of our faith. We profess that it is in all its parts according to God's Word. What is its true sense is, in case of dispute, to be settled by the courts above; but we have agreed to submit to it and be bound by it; and if we do not like the final decision of the supreme judicatory, no course is left but to go out of the Church. For — to a man remaining in its fellowship — I deny and repudiate all right of private judgment, in opposition to the public decision of the whole Church.

The whole of the argument on which I am now to enter is an argument that has respect to the true exposition of our Confession of Faith. The argument will take a wide range; but it is all directed to that point. And I am sorry that the point on which the whole turns my brother Wilson did not attempt to explain. He assumed that there is but one meaning to the term *ability*. This I deny. I hold, on the contrary, that it has two meanings, as well in the Bible as in our standards. He admits only one. His labor, therefore, has been labor lost, as it respects me. He admits one sense of the term; but, if our standards admit two, then he has got but one part of the truth; while I contend that I have got both parts of it, and that therefore his argument falls short of the case. It is not my purpose to declaim on a topic like this. I feel that the providence of God has brought both my brother and myself into circumstances of the deepest responsibility. It is my hope that this trial will be made the occasion, in His hand, of dissipating mutual misapprehension, and of bringing h his own precious truth into clearer light, and establishing

it in a more triumphant and unanswerable manner. I will not disguise the fact that I hope to convince those who have hitherto thought with my brother. I will neither believe nor insinuate that the minds of this Presbytery are so biased that they cannot give an upright judgment. I do not think Dr. Wilson himself meant to convey such an idea. I do expect to convince every minister and every elder, and I am almost sure I shall do it. I rest not this confidence upon myself, but upon the cause I advocate. I cherish the hope, because I know what truth is, and what human nature is; and I am perfectly sure that when the question comes to be fairly stated and distinctly understood, there is no man here who will say I am guilty of heresy. I will even go further than this, and say that I expect to convince my brother Wilson himself; and I have told him so. O! if he would but have given me a chance to do so two years ago! How would our hands have been mutually strengthened, and how might the cause of truth and righteousness have been advanced by our united efforts! I mourn to think how we have both suffered from the want of such an explanation. I grieve to reflect upon the pulling down, and the holding back, and all the want of cordial and brotherly coöperation. And I do trust that God has brought us to this point that all the misunderstanding may be cleared up, and all misrepresentation forever cease. I shall labor for this end as hard as ever I labored with a convicted sinner to bring him to the Lord my Master; and I hope I shall succeed.

I am very sensible that I have undertaken a great work, in attempting to convince my brother on this subject. And I am aware that it is incumbent on me to go to the business wittingly; and I mean to. The task of expounding important doctrinal truth is not a light, extempore affair. Just exposi-

tion is regulated by fixed laws, laws as fixed as those which regulate the motions of the universe; because they are founded in truth, and in the nature of things. And what are these rules and principles?

1. The first is that no writing or instrument of any kind is to be expounded in contradiction to itself. So that, if there are two possible interpretations, that which harmonizes the instrument with itself is to be received as the true interpretation. For it is not to be presumed that a company of pious and sensible men, with full deliberation and under the highest responsibility, will draw up a paper which contradicts itself. They may through infirmity do this, but no such presumption is to be admitted, *a priori*.

2. The instrument is to be explained according to the known nature and attributes of the subject. Thus, when man is spoken of in terms borrowed from the natural world, and these terms, literally received, would imply impotency, we are not to carry over their physical meaning into the moral kingdom. When God says he will take away the heart of stone, if he was speaking of a mountain we might well understand that he meant to remove the granite which was in the midst of it. But when he applies this language to a moral being, to a free agent, the language is not to be taken as literal, but as figurative; and as meaning to take away a moral quality, namely, hatred to God and aversion to his law.

3. The instrument is to be construed with reference to controversies and import of terms which prevailed at the time it was written, and the meaning of theological technics employed in them.

Dr. Wilson has gone to Johnson's dictionary to find out the meaning of theological terms. But he ought to have remembered that there are few dictionaries which undertake to define

the meaning of either theological or of law terms. The technics of one are as much out of the ordinary road as those of the other. Physicians would not expect to find in an ordinary dictionary the definition of medical words; and the same holds of every profession. They all have technics of their own, for which you go in vain to a general dictionary. I say you must go to the time when the instrument was written, and inquire what was then the import of the technical words and phrases employed in the instrument to be expounded. So, if we would understand the Confession of Faith, we must find out in what sense the words "guilt" and "punishment" were employed by the theologians of that day. For a right explication of those terms will go far towards settling the meaning of the whole Confession. Dr. Wilson cannot but know that language never stands still, because society never stands still. The meaning of a word at this day is not necessarily the same with the meaning of that word two hundred years ago; and so every sound lawyer will tell you. *They* have to go back to the days of Judge Hale and Queen Elizabeth. It will not do to go to Webster's dictionary at this day, if we would rightly interpret ancient statutes; no more will it do in respect to the Confession of Faith.

4. It must be interpreted by a comparison with anterior and cotemporaneous creeds and authors: in a word, by the theological *usus loquendi* of the age; because this is according to analogy. The Reformers were all the same sort of men; they were all, with some slight variation, placed in substantially the same circumstances, and it is wonderful to see how much alike the creeds adopted in different parts of Christendom were. Now, if the ancient meaning of terms be in any case different from the meaning of the same terms in our day, the ancient meaning cuts its way. For our creeds were born of them.

And that sense of terms, which was the analogical meaning of those who had all around them the authors of cotemporaneous creeds, must be our guide in construction.

5. The instrument must be interpreted according to the reigning philosophy of the day in which it was written; and

6. According to the intuitive perceptions and the common sense and consciousness of all mankind.

To illustrate the propriety of this rule, let me give an example. I know that there is a propensity to reject all philosophy when we come to the subject of creeds; and yet there is not a human being that does not necessarily employ a philosophy of some sort in interpreting the Bible, and in interpreting every creed founded upon it. The New Testament cannot rightly be understood without a knowledge of the philosophy of the Gnostics. And, in like manner, a man must know what was the philosophy of the Armenian system, in order rightly to apprehend that portion of the creed which relates to that subject. I will only say, in respect to the intuitive perceptions of men as a rule of exposition, that it is God who made men, and that he made both their body and their mind; and the Bible, without entering on a system of pathology, everywhere takes it for granted that God thoroughly understands human nature. And here I will observe incidentally, that it is a good way, and one of the best ways, to study mental philosophy, to collect from the Bible that which it assumes; and this was the only way in which I first studied it. In conclusion, I observe that to enter upon the Confession of Faith, for the purpose of exposition, without these attendant lamps, is to insure misinterpretation and contention and every evil work.

I commence with the subject of Free Agency, or the *Natural* Ability of Man, as the foundation of obligation and *moral* government.

I begin with this first because, as Dr. Wilson has said, it is "the hinge of the whole controversy." This is eminently true. It is the different theories of free agency and accountability which have, in all ages, agitated the Church. There is not a discussion about doctrine, at this time, in the Presbyterian Church, which does not originate in discrepant opinions respecting the created constitutional powers of man as a free agent, and the grounds of moral obligation and personal accountability. Settle the philosophy of free agency,—what are the powers of a free agent,—how they are put together, and how they operate in personal accountable action,—and controversy among all the friends of Christ will cease. It has been often said that it never can be settled. I believe no such thing. The perplexities of the schoolmen are passing away, and the symptoms of approximation to an enlightened and settled opinion among all evangelical denominations are beginning to appear. I have no discoveries to publish on this subject,—no favorite views of my own to propagate. It has been my great desire to finish my course and keep the faith without any. The doctrines of free agency and natural ability, which I hold and advocate, have been the revealed doctrines of the Church from the beginning. They are not new divinity, nor new school; and, though I am compelled to admit that there are some in the Church who, when they are correctly explained, do not hold them, the number, in my belief, is very small, who do not, when all misapprehension is removed, believe the doctrines just as I believe them. They are also fundamental doctrines, which, if misinterpreted, will always environ the Calvinistic system with invincible prejudice and odium without, and fill it with fierce conflicts within. But, when correctly understood, they will pour the stream of

truth, pure, and full, and clear as crystal, through all the channels of the associated system.

The doctrine claimed by the prosecutor as the true doctrine of the Confession and the Bible is, that to fallen man there remains no ability of any kind or degree to obey the Gospel; that, though he is a free agent, it is a free agency which includes no ability of any kind to obey God; and that none is necessary to constitute perfect obligation to obey, and perfect accountability for disobedience; — that the obligation to obey may be infinite, and the punishment for disobedience just and eternal, where the obedience claimed is a natural impossibility, as really as the creation of the world, or the raising of the dead.

Dr. Wilson has made a distinct avowal that free agency and moral obligation to obey law do not include *any ability of any kind.*

Dr. Wilson. — I limited that avowal to man in his fallen state.

Dr. Beecher. — Yes, so I understood it. We are talking about man in his fallen state. Dr. Wilson, then, admits that it requires no *ability of any sort*, in fallen man, to make him an accountable agent, and a subject of God's moral government.

Dr. Wilson. — With respect to fallen man, *I do.*

Now, it must be admitted that in this avowal Dr. Wilson has the merit of magnanimous honesty. He is fairly out on a subject where, with many a man for an opponent, I should have had to ferret him out. There can, at least, be no doubt as to what Dr. Wilson does hold. If we are to go to Synod, this point will be clear; and when the report is published, no man can misunderstand this part of it. It is seldom that we meet a man who would be willing to march right up to such a

position, without winking or mystification. But Dr. Wilson has done it unflinchingly and thoroughly. He interprets the Confession of Faith and the Bible as teaching that God may and does command men to perform natural impossibilities, and justly punish them forever for not obeying,—though they could no more obey than they could create a world! And he has riveted the matter by his mental philosophy of the will. Instead of supposing a mind with powers of agency, acting freely in view of motives, he supposes the will to be entirely dependent on the constitution and condition of body and mind, and external circumstances; and controlled by these as absolutely as straws on the bosom of a river are controlled by the motions of the water.

It is claimed, then, by the prosecutor, that the Confession of Faith and the Bible teach that fallen man has no ability of any kind to obey God, and that none is necessary to perfect obligation and the just desert of eternal punishment.

Now, my alleged heresy consists in believing and teaching that the constitutional powers of a free agent, including the possibility of their correct exercise in obedience, are necessary to moral obligation, and to reward and punishment, under the benevolent, wise, and just government of God.

And I do hold and teach, that while to a just *liability* to all the consequences of the fall on our constitution and character, no ability of any kind on our part to prevent or avert the calamity existed, or was necessary,—the evil coming on his posterity, as the curse of his disobedience through our relation to him as our federal head,—yet, to a personal accountability to law and desert of punishment, ability of some kind or degree is certainly indispensable. Some possibility of obedience in adult man is indispensable to personal obligation, and a just punishment for transgression. Liability to be

involved in the consequences, natural and moral, of the conduct of those who represent us, is a law of human society, and probably a law of the social intelligent universe,—and, as it existed and operated in the case of Adam and his posterity, is doubtless a wise, benevolent, and just constitution. But, while a liability to suffer the consequences of another's conduct, on the ground of a just constitution of things, demands no ability to avert the evil, accountability for personal transgression does require some ability to refuse the evil and choose the good. There must exist the faculties and powers of a free agent, involving a possibility of right action. Faculties that can do nothing, and powers that have no relation of a cause to its effect,—that is, action,—are nonentities. A free agency that cannot act at all, in any way, is no free agency; and a free agency that has no power of a right action is, in that respect, no free agency. There must be an agent qualified to act as he is required to act,—something in his constitution which qualifies him to be governed by law, and rewards and punishments,—as matter and animals are not qualified. There must be something which qualifies for obedience, and creates obligation which renders obedience possible; and makes it reasonable that it should be rendered and rewarded, and just that disobedience should be punished.

Now, I have taught, and I do hold, with our Confession, that the mind of man, though in a fallen state, is still endued by its Creator "with that natural liberty that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to do good or evil, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature,"—nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes (that is, the power of the soul to choose life or death in the view of motives) taken away, but rather established. This is what I mean, and all I mean, by the natural ability of man to obey the Gospel.

uses, while upheld by Heaven, are adequate to
effects; and the mind of man, though fallen, is,
l, a cause of action sufficient in respect to the pos-
edience, to create infinite obligation to obey. The
ɜd, but did not destroy, the free agency of man.
the use of his powers in action, but did not de-
istence of those powers which distinguish man as
moral government from animals, and which lie at
ɔn of all obligation. This is my alleged heresy;
ɜ that it is a heresy is to decide that the Confes-
and the Bible teach that to fallen man no ability
ɜ necessary to constitute infinite obligation, and a
eternal punishment.

I thus insist on the existence of the commensu-
ɔf an agent, as essential to free agency and ac-
I do not believe, and have never taught, that
ɜnce is essential to free agency; or that the free
ı suffices to create a perfect obligation to obey
without the special influence of the Holy Spirit,
fallen man even the lowest degree of holy obe-
the contrary, I hold and teach that such a change
ution of man was produced by the fall as creates
nd prevalent propensity to actual sin,—to the
affections on things below, and loving the creature
od;—preventing in all men the existence of
ɜecuring the existence of that actual depravity,
ity against God, not subject to his law, neither
,—a bias which neutralizes the power of truth
ɔ reconcile men to God, till it is overcome by the
ce of the Holy Spirit in regeneration; and which,
ed by that event, still remains in the regenerate
entirely by the Spirit, in making the soul of the

saint meet for heaven. I only say, with our Confession, that this bias to actual sin acts not in the form of a coërcive cause, creating a fatal and irresistible necessity of sinning; and of course constitutes no excuse for actual sin, and no mitigation of the curse due to it, or abatement of God's boundless mercy in providing redemption for incorrigible man. This impediment to obedience, arising from a prevalent bias of nature and actual aversion to spiritual obedience, is called, in the Confession and the Bible, inability to obey, on account, as I suppose, of the same certainty between their existence and moral result that appertains to natural causes and their effects; and it is called a moral inability, to indicate that, though wrong, as securing wrong action with unfailing certainty, it does so not by a fatal necessity of sinning, but by an unnecessary, unreasonable, inexcusable aversion of the soul to God and his reasonable service.

While I teach, therefore, the ability of man as a free agent, and as the ground of obligation, I teach his moral inability as a sinner,— the subject of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God,— not subject to his law, neither indeed can be.

In the true sense of the terms as now explained, and as employed in the Confession, and in the Bible, and in the common and well-understood language of men, I teach that "no mere man, since the fall, has been able perfectly to keep the commandments of God; and that the natural man cannot understand and know the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned; and that no man can come to Christ, except the Father draw him."

I proceed now to show that the preceding account of man's agency, and natural ability, and of his total depravity and impotency, contains the doctrine of our Confession, and Bible.

t at issue is not whether fallen man ever did or
right in a spiritual sense, without the regener-
Holy Spirit. It is admitted and insisted that he
and never will. The point at issue is, in what
certainty of the continuous wrong action of the
to pass. Does it come to pass coërced or un-
necessity? Does fallen man choose under the
such a constitution of body, and mind, and motive,
olition bears the relation of an effect to a natural
ating cause, rendering any other choice than the
mes to pass, impossible in existing circumstances?
man still an agent so constituted that in every
he is unconstrained and uncoërced by any neces-
t which binds natural effects to their causes? Is
xempt from the laws of a natural necessity that
orced to choose wrong; there existing, in every
ibility and obligation growing out of the possibility
or contrary choice? The latter is the view of
and accountability which I shall endeavor to
the doctrine of the Confession and the Bible;

s no reason to doubt that God is able to create
ho, being sustained and placed under the illumi-
fluence of his laws and perfect government, shall
y or disobey in the regular exercise of the powers
nind.

d impossibility of created self-existing agents,
ndently of God, does not touch the point; for
n of agency able to choose the good and refuse
not imply the mind's self-existence, but the
powers while upheld; and it might as well be
cannot create natural causes, which, while he

upholds them, can, by their own power, produce an effect, as that he cannot create mind, which, while upheld by him, is capable of acting right or wrong, under the requirements and motives of his government. Both lead to Pantheism, denying all created causes, and making God the only cause and the only agent in the universe.

There is no perceptible difficulty in creating mind, more than in creating matter; in creating active, than passive existence; or thinking than unthinking, voluntary than involuntary being. It is just as conceivable that God should create mind endowed with an energy which, while it is sustained, is commensurate to every requisite action under his government, by its own power; as that he should create passive matter, dependent for every movement and change on external causation.

How God can originate existence of any kind is incomprehensible, but no one can prove it to be impossible. The creation of an intelligent universe, of free, accountable minds, capable of all the responsibilities of a perfect, eternal government, is just as conceivable, therefore, as the creation of hills and valleys, plants and animals.

II. If it be possible to create and govern mind upon the principles of free agency, and a perfect and permanent moral government, the presumption is strong that this is, in fact, the divine plan. What other conceivable course could the wisdom of God devise, so comprehensive of good as the creation of a universe of mind, with its constitutional susceptibilities, and active and social and voluntary powers, qualified for all the results of a government of perfect laws, perfectly administered?

It is self-evident that the creation of unorganised matter 'd not illustrate the copiousness and power of the Divine lence. God might amuse himself with curious work-

it how could he impart happiness to unorganized
t is equally clear that mere *animal life* falls, in
of enjoyment, unspeakably below the capabilities
low limited is the range of the monotonous appe-
r narrow the circle of mere fleeting, instinctive
how feeble the momentary tie of natural affection,
th its corroboration by ties of blood, and habits of
and the illumination of reason, and the powers of
d the light of an anticipated eternity of unex-
urified, augmented and reciprocated friendship!
easurable is that expansion of capacity in man,
imal, which opens the eye of his intellect upon
, will, and government of God; which brings him
p with his Maker, and opens before him the joys
mmortality, associated with a reasonable service,
it activity, under the high and perfect guidance

IND, through a duration which will never end,
le of more enjoyment than it were, in the nature
sible to pour through the narrow channels of
ct and appetite. The river of pleasure is of
nted as flowing from the throne of God and the
, as being the result of his intelligent creation and
nent: what an ocean of blessedness, compared
f the bucket which any other conceivable mode
. have received! A universe, that can live in
ent and future, and experience a copiousness
blessedness unknown to the moping animal!
ed at the limits of animalism, and forborne to
would have been to prefer the ray to the sun
the universe. It would seem to be manifest
hen, that for the most perfect manifestation of

his wisdom and benevolence, the Supreme Intelligence would call into being around him other beings like himself, to hold communion with him and with one another, and after his own illustrious example to be made happy by their own benevolent activity in doing good; would create *mind*, and wake up intelligence round about his throne, for the mirrors of creation to throw back the light of his glory upon,—hearts to burn with love, and wills to obey, and energy to act, with high deservings of good or evil; — a universe so powerful in intellect as to be able to look with open face and steadfast vision upon the strong light of his glory, and so capacious of heart as to be able to receive the tide of joy which his benevolence shall pour through the soul; — so energetic as to sustain the strong emotion which his excellence produces, and to perform forever untiringly the glorious work of benevolence; — and so free that all its actions under the guidance of law shall be its own, and invested with all the attributes of a perfect accountability, which in all its consequences of good or evil shall reach through eternity; *social*, also, we should expect it to be, holding affectionate communion with God and other minds; capable of moral excellence, and all the fulness of perfect friendship and society. Obliterate conscious intelligence, and voluntariness, and accountability, from the human mind, — disrobe it of its spontaneous affections and mutual complacencies,— and you put down the race to the mere caricature of manhood.

There must exist the power of intellect, perception, comparison, judgment, conscience, affections, taste, memory, the discursive power of thought, the power of volition, and those exercises of soul which constitute personal excellence and inspire affection.

It is only in the possession of these powers that individual

happiness is enjoyed. Convince a man that he is only the instinctive animal of a day, and you brutalize him. We love and are loved, admire and are admired, we are praised or blamed, on the ground of a real mental energy of our own, capable of such high and eternal responsibilities. Blot out the intelligence and spontaneous affection of husband and wife, of parent and child, and the family is ruined; the moral attractions cease, its sun goes down, and it becomes a den of animals.

In the nature of things, the existence of a universe of mind, of free agents, of rational, social, accountable beings, would seem to be indispensable to the highest illustration and expression of the goodness of God.

III. God has actually made free agents, who were able, in the exercise of their created powers, to choose either way,—life or death.

This is the doctrine of our Confession and Catechisms. "Man in his state of innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it."—Confess. ch. IX. sec. 2.

"Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state wherein they were created, by sinning against God."—Shorter Catechism, p. 322.

It is the testimony of the Bible, "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions."—Ecc. 7: 29.

It is a part of the recorded history of the intelligent universe, and of God's moral government, that the *angels* kept not their first estate, and that man being in honor abode not.

Now, had Adam, created holy, been free to choose obedi-

ence *only*, and *that* by a natural, constitutional, unavoidable necessity, so that by the power of natural causation his choice must be in accordance with his character and constitution of mind, and the constitution of things around him, or the active principle which prevailed in his nature when volition took place; how could he be said to have power to will that which is good, yet mutably so that he might fall from it, and how could he possibly fall? But he had power to stand and power to fall; and that is the essence of free agency, and was the ground of his accountability.

IV. Nothing is apparent, in the nature of the fall, from which to infer necessarily the destruction of the constitutional powers of free agency in Adam or his posterity. It was an overt act,—an actual sin. "In evil hour he put forth the hand, and plucked and ate the fruit forbidden." But does actual sin destroy the possibility of right action? It creates aversion,—it secures the certainty, under law, of continuance in evil, if unreclaimed by a mediator and almighty power. But does it do this by a constitutional necessity, like the power of a natural cause to its effect? If so, the adulterer, and the drunkard, and the liar, would like to alleviate their remorse, and quiet their fearful looking for of fiery indignation, by the consoling information that the more they live after the flesh, the deeper the oblivion of accountability, and crime, and punishment.

But the Bible nowhere teaches, and the Confession expressly denies, that Adam or his posterity lost their powers of agency by the fall, and became impotent to good on the ground of a natural impossibility of obedience.

Did the change of character, then, which the fall occasioned, lade the possibility of subsequent obedience in Adam? s the change? It was the utter loss of all holiness,

ɜvalence of entire depravity,— every imagination
ghts of his heart became evil, and only evil, con-
But does total depravity render spiritual obedience
ɪpossibility? How? Did the perfect holiness of
.er sinning impossible? How, then, did he sin?
ɪlp him? Did the devil force him? But, if per-
ɜ does not destroy the possibility of sinning, how
ɜct sinfulness destroy the possibility of obedience?
as much in the "state of man" as holy, "in-
his rational, animal and moral powers, with the
ple which prevails in him," to make disobedience
a holy mind, as in the same state of things in an
to render obedience impossible? But, if perfect
ɪ not destroy the natural possibility of sinning,
:fect sinfulness destroy the natural possibility of
And, if the fall did not destroy the natural
ɪncy in Adam which rendered obedience possible,
ɪd a reasonable service; how should it destroy in
those powers and responsibilities which it did
in himself? Has the fall overacted, and come
eater desolation on the represented than on the
ɪnd representative of his race?
man possesses, since the fall, the powers of
ite to obligation, on the ground of the possibility
is a matter of consciousness. Not one of the
ɪd which constituted ability before the fall have
ɜd by that event. All that has ever been con-
ɪt can now be conceived, as entering into the
'a free agent, capable of choosing life or death,
ɪxist in Adam when he could and did obey, yet
.ve the fall. The intellect, the conscience, the
of the soul to pleasure and pain, and the heart,

including the will and affections of the soul,—all these as certainly exist, and as plainly exist, as the five senses.

That nothing has been subtracted by the fall from the powers of agency requisite to the possibility of obedience, is strongly evident from the fact, that no one, by the most careful analysis of the mind, has ever been able to detect and name the fatal deficiency. The motive to make such an exculpatory discovery, and throw off hated obligation and feared punishment, has been as powerful as the terrors of eternity; and the effort as constant as the flow of ages, and urged with all that talent and ingenuity and learning could apply, and the wisdom from beneath inspire, to establish the excusable impotency of man; and to this day the effort has been abortive. To appearance, the powers of the mind, and the law of God, and the glorious Gospel, and the providence of God, are, as they should be, to render obedience a reasonable service, and impenitence and unbelief without excuse; and where, amid the constitutional powers of agency, the defect lies, has never been discovered,—what it is, has never been told,—or, that there is any such defect, proved.

VI. Choice, in its very nature, implies the possibility of a different or contrary election to that which is made. There is always an alternative to that which the mind decides on, with the conscious power of choosing either. In the simplest form of alternative, it is to choose or not to choose in a given way; but, in most cases, the alternatives lie between two or many objects of choice presented to the mind; and, if you deny to mind this alternative power,—if you insist that by a constitution anterior to choice, of the nature of a natural cause producing its effect, the choice which takes place can come, cannot but come into being, and that none other than this ay possibility exist,—you have as perfect a [illegible]

choice as ever Pagan, or Atheist, or Antinomian conceived. The question of free will is not whether man *chooses;* this is notorious,— none deny it; but whether his choice is free as opposed to a fatal necessity, as opposed to the laws of instinct and natural causation; whether it is the act of a mind so qualified for choice, as to decide between alternatives, uncoerced by the energy of a natural cause necessitating its effect: whether it is the act of an agent who might have abstained from the choice he made, and made one which he did not. To speak of choice as being free, which is produced by the laws of a natural necessity, and which cannot but be *when* and *what* it is, more than the effects of natural causes can govern the time, and manner, and qualities of their being, is a perversion of language. The doctrine of the Christian fathers, and of Luther and Calvin, and all the Protestant Confessions and standard writers, is not merely that men act by volition or choice,— the choice being the effect of natural causes, as really and entirely as the falling of rain, or the electric spark, or the involuntary shock that attends it. They meant and taught that the will is high above the coërcion of natural causation,— the fatality of the Stoics, Gnostics, Manicheans, or Epicureans; that it is the action of the mind of an intelligent agent, free as opposed to coërcion or constraint; so that if the mental decision is right, it is properly associated with a reward, and if wrong, with punishment,— an act which might, in possibility, have been refrained from, or resolved on, when declined. This is what our Confession teaches and means, when it says that "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil;" and that God's decrees, which extend to every event, "offer no violence to the will of the creature, and take

not away, but rather establish the liberty and contingency of second causes;" meaning by contingency, as Dr. Twiss says every university scholar knows, "things which come to pass avoidably, and with a possibility of not coming to pass." This is the language of our own Confession in respect to the voluntary actions of men as contingent; that is, as avoidable, and with a possibility of not coming to pass. To illustrate the fatality of an agency in which choice is the unavoidable effect of a natural constitutional and coërcive causation, let us suppose an extended manufactory, all whose wheels, like those in Ezekiel's vision, are inspired with intelligence, and instinct with life, some crying holy! holy! as they rolled, and others aloud blaspheming God,—all voluntary in their praises and blasphemies, but the volitions, like the motions of the wheels themselves, produced by the great water-wheel and the various bands which keep the motion and the adoration and the blasphemy a-going,—how much accountability would attach to these voluntary praises and blasphemies produced by the laws of water-power, and what would it avail to say, as a reason for justifying God in punishing these blasphemies, O! but they are free, they are voluntary, they choose to blaspheme? Truly, indeed, they blaspheme voluntarily; but their choice to do so is necessary in the same sense that the motion of the great wheel, which the water, by the power of gravity, turns, is necessary, and just as destitute of accountability.

In this account of free agency the ablest writers concur. Edwards says, "In every act of will whatever, the mind chooses one thing rather than another, the will's determining between the two is voluntary determining; and to act voluntarily is to act electively where things are chosen." "There [illegible] less of mind," he says, "and capacity of nature, and

; else sufficient but a disposition. Nothing is want-
rill." "A moral agent is a being that is capable of
ns that have a moral quality, and which can prop-
nominated good or evil." Edwards the younger
by power be meant natural power, I grant that we
a power to choose, not only one of several things
igible, if any such there be, but one of things
nequally eligible, and to take the least eligible."
r freedom must mean freedom from something; if
dom from coäction or natural necessity, that is
an by freedom." Buck, on the article "Neces-
"Necessity is, whatever is done by a cause or
is irresistible, in which sense it is opposed to free-
is a necessary agent, if all his actions be so
by the causes preceding each action, that not one
could possibly not have come to pass, or have been
an it hath been, nor one future action can possibly
pass, or be otherwise than it shall be. On the
it is asserted that he is a free agent, if he be able
under the causes and circumstances he then is, to
things; or, in other words, if he be not unavoid-
ined in every point of time by the circumstances
the causes he is under, to do any one thing he
ot possibly to do any other thing." And Dr.
"The power of choosing right or wrong makes
moral agent; his actually choosing wrong makes
."

ice, without the possibility of other or contrary
immemorial doctrine of fatalism.

that all who assert the natural inability of man
I charge them not with holding or admitting
aces of their theory, and I mean nothing unkind

or invidious in the proposition I have laid down; and truth and argument are not invidious. But I say that the theory of choice — that it is what it is by a natural, constitutional necessity, and that a man cannot help choosing what he does choose, and can by no possibility choose otherwise — *is* the doctrine of fatalism in all its forms. That there are *laws of choice*, so uniform that in the same circumstances the action of mind can be anticipated with great certainty, is not denied. That *choice* is in accordance with the state of body and mind, and character, and external circumstances, may be admitted, or that it is as the greatest apparent good is, may be admitted; but that is it so necessarily, to the exclusion of all ability of any kind to be other than it is, cannot be admitted, without abandoning the field of God's government of accountable agents, and going to the very centre of the region of fatalism. The certainty of choice in given circumstances does not decide the manner of the certainty, as one of natural necessity, without power to the contrary. That a man always, in the same circumstances, chooses alike, is no evidence that he had no ability of any kind to choose otherwise, and chooses by a fatal necessity. Uniformity of choice, in the same circumstances, is just as consistent with free agency and natural ability, as with necessity and fatalism. But that choice, without the power of contrary choice, is fatalism in all its diversified forms, is obvious to inspection, and a matter of historical record. The fatality of the Stoics was an eternal series of cause and effect, controlling by inexorable necessity all events, from which the will of gods and men was not exempt.*

* The free agency advocated by them was, as Ritter has plainly shown, rely exemption in choice from the necessitating influence of external ects, and not from an internal necessity of choice [illegible]

The fatalism of Epicurus was the atomic theory, the fortuitous concourse of atoms,—intelligence in results without an intelligent being, design without a designer, and choice, the product of the chance movements of material atoms.

The Gnostic fatality made sin an eternal property of matter, and the contamination of mind the result of bodily inoculation and contact, and by an unavoidable necessity precluding freedom of will as utterly as the communication of disease by virus.

The Manicheans held with the Gnostics to the corruption of matter, and also to sin in the essence or substance of the soul; both making sin a matter of necessity, independent of choice, and controlling volition, as natural causes produce their effects.

The fatalism of Spinoza was material and pantheistic, making God identical with the world and the only agent, and himself subject to a self-existent, eternal necessity of action, and the author alike of sin and holiness.

The fatalism of the French revolutionary atheists was Sadducean: that all existence is material, and all its combinations and changes the result of material laws in the form of natural cause and effect; that mind is matter, that volition is the result of material action; and that death, the decomposition of the body, is an eternal sleep. This is the fatalism of Robert Dale Owen and Fanny Wright.

The fatalism of Hobbs and Hume was made to approximate a little more to the confines of rationality and truth, but not near enough to leave necessity behind, and bring them

natural constitution and propensities, which are forced upon us by a universal fatality, so that we will according to our propensities, even as a round stone necessarily rolls down a mountain-side by reason of its shape and weight.

under the government of God, as free, accountable creatures. If they admitted the existence of mind and spirit distinct from matter (of which there is some doubt), they clothed motives, as the antecedents of volition, with the coërcive power of material causes to their effects, and thus destroyed the liberty of the will, and introduced a universal coërcive necessity of choice, just in all cases as it is, without the possibility of one more or less, or different from those which actually come to pass.

The necessity of Priestley and Belsham was material, and all volition in accordance with the laws and action of material causes. That motives produce volition necessarily, on the same principle that natural causes produce their effects; so that choice, as the spontaneous action of mind, enlightened and guided and influenced by law and motive, has no existence, but is in all cases the passive effect of antecedent natural causation, as inconsistent with accountability and desert of punishment as the sparks that rise by their less specific gravity than that of the surrounding atmosphere, or the rain-drops that fall by their superior gravity to the sustaining element.

VIII. The supposition of accountability for choice, coerced by a natural necessity, is contrary to the nature of things as God has constituted them. The relation of cause and effect pervades the universe. The natural world is full of it. It is the basis of all science, and of all intellectual operations with respect to mind. Can the intellect be annihilated, and thinking go on? No more can the power of choice be annihilated, and free agency go on. Is there not a capacity of choice, with power of contrary choice, in angels? and was there not in Adam before he fell? But all the powers of the mind, perception, association, abstraction, memory, taste, and feeling, conscience, and capacity of choice, which

red and did exist when man was created free, are
ed to constitute free agency; and can it be that
hich capacitated Adam freely to choose is demol-
the Lord still requires of his posterity that they,
ı powers of their ancestor, should exercise the per-
ıce that was demanded of him? Do the requisi-
r continue when all the necessary antecedents to
re destroyed? Has God required effects without
If he has, then he has, in the case of man, vio-
nalogies of the whole universe; for in the natural
is no effect without a cause, nor is there in the
world. How, then, can it be that the same anal-
; hold in the moral world, where there exist such
responsibilities? What! will God send men to
loing impossibilities — for not producing a moral
t a cause?

supposition of continued obligation and respons-
all the powers of causation are gone, is contrary
ɔn sense and intuitive perception of all mankind.
see and do see that there can be no effect without
hey are so constituted that they cannot help
ɔeling this. That nothing cannot produce some-
intuitive perception, the basis of that illustrious
ı by which we prove the being of a God. For,
nay exist without a cause, all things may; and
get hold of the first strand of an argument to
ɜtence of a God. All men see that to require
without a competent cause of choice in mind,
'equire an effect without a cause. What is the
accountability? It is the possession of some-
ɔcounted for. But, if a man does not possess the
hoice with power to the contrary, what has he

got to be accountable for? He sees and feels that he is not to blame; and you cannot with more infallible certainty make men believe, and fix them in the belief, that they are not responsible, than to teach them that they have not the power of choosing, only as they do actually choose. It is the way to make a man a fatalist. But you cannot do it. God has put that in the breast of man which cannot be reasoned away. Every man knows and feels that he has power and is responsible. Men never associate blame with the qualities of will or action, on the supposition of a natural impossibility that they should be otherwise, but always on the supposition that they were able to have chosen or acted otherwise. What would be the education of a family, on this principle? There is not a child five years old but understands this. He breaks a plate or spoils a piece of furniture, and, when he apprehends punishment, he pleads, with confidence, that he did not mean to do it. His language is, "I couldn't help it," and on that plea he rests. The child understands it; and the parent understands it; and all human laws are built upon it. Why is not an idiot punished when he commits a crime? For the lack of that natural ability which alone makes him responsible. Why are not lunatics treated as subjects of law? Because their reason has been so injured as to destroy free agency, and with it to put an end to their accountability. Look at the government of a family. If one child is an idiot, the parent does not treat that child as he does the rest. He feels and admits that the poor idiot is not responsible for its acts; and the same principle holds in the case of monomania, where the mind is deranged in one particular respect. I was myself acquainted with a case of this sort; an individual in whom all the powers were perfect, save that the power of association was wanting,—that faculty by which one thought

draws on another,—and she was a perfect curiosity. She would commence talking on one subject, and before the sentence was complete she would commence on another, which had not the remotest connection with it, and in an instant pass to a third, which was foreign from both; and thus she would hop, skip and jump, over all the world,— there was no concatenation of thought. Now, suppose this woman had been required to deliver a Fourth-of-July oration, admitting that she possessed all the knowledge and talent in other respects necessary to such a task; — on her failing to do it, is she to be taken to the whipping-post, and lacerated for that which she wanted the natural ability to do? The magistrate who would award such a sentence would at once become infamous; and shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Will the glorious and righteous Jehovah reap where he has not sown, and gather where he has not strewed? Will he require obedience where all power to obey is gone? Men do not require that, when even one faculty is gone; and will God, when *all* are gone, come and take his creature by the throat and say to him, Pay that thou owest? That was the libel which the slothful servant brought against his Lord: "I knew thee that thou wast a hard master, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strown, and I was afraid." Who would not be afraid, under such a ruler? Who could tell what would come next? God requires according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not. Were it otherwise, who could tell what wantonness and what oppression might not proceeed from heaven's high throne?

X. It is a matter of universal consciousness, that men are free to choose right or wrong, life or death.

Of nothing are men more thoroughly informed, or more

competent to judge unerringly, than in respect to their mode of action, whether it is coërced or free.

Testimony may mislead, and the senses by disease may deceive; but consciousness is the end of controversy; its evidence cannot be increased, and, if it be distrusted, there is no alternative but universal scepticism. Our consciousness of the mode of mental action in choice, as uncoërced and free, equals our consciousness of existence itself; and the man who doubts either gives indications of needing medical treatment, instead of argument. When a man does wrong, and then reflects upon the act, he feels that he might have abstained; and so when he looks forward to a future action. When, for example, he deliberates whether he shall commit a theft, he listens to the pleading of cowardice or conscience on the one side, and of covetousness and laziness on the other. All these things come up and are looked at, and, after considering them, he at length screws up his mind to the point, and does the deed; and when he has done it, does he not know, does he not feel, that he could have chosen the other way? If not, why did he balance when he was considering? Did he not know that he had power to act and power to leave it undone? And when it is past recall, is he not conscious that he need not have done it? And does he not say, in his remorse, "I am sorry that I did it"? I say, therefore, it is a matter of common consciousness to all mankind, that they act uncoërced, and with the power of acting otherwise. Give a child an apple and an orange; after he has eaten the orange, he will wish he had it back again, and he will say, "I wish I had eaten the apple and kept the orange." But why, if he did not feel that at the time he had the power to keep the orange and eat the apple? Yes, men have the power; and the consciousness that they have it will go with them through

What says God, when he warns the sinner of the es of his evil choice? "Lest thou mourn at the thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, [hated instruction and my heart despised reproof, not obeyed the voice of my teacher, nor inclined ı them that instruct me." Incurable regret will the perfect consciousness that when he did evil he done right. This is the worm that never dies, at will never be quenched. And because this ss is in men, you never can reason them out of a countability. Many have tried it, but none have gth of time succeeded; and the reason is plain,— ning which the mind is more conscious of than the own voluntary action, with the power of acting ong; the mind sees and knows and regrets done wrong. Take away this consciousness, and emorse. You cannot produce remorse as long as that his act was not his own,—that it was not ut the effect of compulsion. He may dread the s, but you never can make him feel remorse for s own account. This is the reason why men who d away the existence of God, and argued that to t volition without a competent cause in mind is ı effect without a cause, to prove that the soul is matter, know, as soon as they reflect, that all ng is false. There is a lamp within, which they guish; and, after all their metaphysics, they are at they act freely, and that there is a God to re accountable; and, hence it is that when they an, and a storm comes on, and they expect to tom, they begin straightway to pray to God and sins.

The natural impossibility of choosing otherwise than we do choose is contrary, then, not only to the common sense and intuitive perceptions of men, but contrary to their internal consciousness. There is a deep and universal consciousness in all men as to the freedom of choice; and, in denying this, you reverse God's constitution of man. You assume that God gave a deceptive constitution to mind, or a deceptive consciousness. Now, I think that God is as honest in the moral world as he is in the natural world. I believe that in our consciousness he tells the truth; and that the natural constitution and universal feelings and perceptions of men are the voice of God speaking the truth; and if the truth is not here, where may we expect to find it?

It has been insisted by some that in looking for the ground of accountability men never go beyond the fact itself of voluntariness; if the deed, whether good or evil, be voluntary, that satisfies. It does; but it is because all men include, unfailingly, both in their theory and consciousness, the supposition of powers of agency unhindered and uncoerced by any fatal necessity. But, convince them that choice is an effect over which mind has no more control than over the drops of rain, and the common sense of the world would revolt against the accountability of choice merely because it was choice. There is, therefore, a universal practical profession of man's free agency, as including the capacity of choice, uncoërced and free. All men claim a desert of reward for well-doing, and complain of ingratitude and injustice when it is denied. They admit and insist that those who injure them in person, good name, or substance, deserve punishment. They admit that laws and rewards and punishments are necessary to the government of men, and just if administered according to their deeds. Even atheists

and fatalists can rail against superstition and priestcraft. and bigotry and persecution, as deserving execration and punishment; an evidence that when consciousness and common sense prevail, their sceptical theory is a dead letter. A nation of atheists were constrained, in words and deeds, to falsify their philosophy; and in the family and in the government to talk and act as if men were free agents, and accountable for their deeds.

XI. Beside all the preceding, we add that all attempts to govern man, and form his character and elevate his condition, upon any other supposition than his spontaneous agency, pervert his nature, and debase society. Just in proportion as mental culture is superseded by force, he sinks in the scale of being, till he becomes a stupid or a ferocious animal. Treat men as if they were dogs, and soon they will act like dogs. But, the moment you treat them as free moral agents, and responsible for their actions, that moment you begin to elevate them. Treat a child with affection, repose confidence in him, and address his reason,— he feels that he is raised, and he acts accordingly; and just as you depart from this course you become unable to manage your child. He gets out of your hands,— he gets above you; for, as respects his relation to you, he is indomitable. The will of man is stronger th~y anything in the universe, except the Almighty God; .at there you disregard this truth, you ruin your child. ..ong. But

XII. God requires of his subjects only Look at the himself, to his own moral excellence, but h.ys free agency, obligation on himself to work impossibilitie.igation to speak *impose* obligations on his subjects which b.igation. Sinning to assume? He does not regard it as an.y more in men than *self* to work impossibilities; does he co.ther; and, therefore, in his subjects? .ed on unimpaired, un-

He has no *desire* to work impossibilities himself; why should he *desire* it in his creatures? He has never *tried*, and never will *try*, to work an impossibility: and why should he command his creatures *to do* what he himself neither desires nor tries to accomplish? He *cannot* work impossibilities: and how can it be thought that he will *require* of his creatures *that which he himself cannot do?*

The original powers of free agency and accountability bestowed on man, in innocency, decide that power to choose, with a power of choice to the contrary, is an essential constituent of accountability, in all his posterity. There can be no doubt that God is able to make a free agent,—to bring a mind into being which is capable of doing right or wrong, under a perfect law. There are two orders of intellectual beings with which we are acquainted, angels and men. With respect to Adam in innocency, we know, certainly, that God laid the foundation of his accountability in a free agency, which included both the ability of standing and the ability of falling. Before either Adam or the angels acted at all, they had a capacity to respond to the divine requirements; and it was indispensable to their moral action that they should. But, if this was necessary to begin moral accountability, why is it not equally necessary to continue it? Did God give to man more than he needed? Surely not. God has told us what he did. There is no metaphysics about it. He conferred upon him no one item of power which he afterwards took away. The Confession says so; and the perceptions of all mankind, and the analogy of God's government, both in the ural world and moral world, and the intuitive knowledge we all possess of the connection of cause and effect, and oundation of moral obligation, all go to establish and he truth.

ument is, that free agency and obligation were com-
. the possession of natural ability commensurate
at God required; and that what was necessary to
is equally necessary to continue them, and always
ally necessary. I know that it is said that the devil
nto a state of natural inability. But to this I can't
ave no doubt the devil would be glad to think so.
elieve his deep and insupportable anguish, if he
re that he had never sinned but once, and that ever
e has been a poor, helpless creature. No! he has
his fall, and will sin again. He does possess free
he can't run away from it. It is a necessary
his being, and so it is of ours. God will live,
will live, and the curses of his law will live; and
reason why the punishment of the next world is
ripes continue to follow upon the footsteps of
a to all eternity.

t there was nothing in the fall to destroy man's
The fall in Adam was occasioned by a single
but does actual sin destroy free agency? If so,
nd all liars will be glad to know it. The more
drink, and the more lies they tell, the less will be
tability. No, the fall did not destroy free agency
ility. It did create a powerful bias, so that there
itable certainty that man would go wrong. But
stroy his capacity of going right. Look at the
that would follow. If sin destroys free agency,
a who tells the truth is under obligation to speak
e who tells lies is not under obligation. Sinning
roy the power of obedience any more in men than
lam. It destroyed it in neither; and, therefore,
n fell, the law marched on unimpaired, un-

changed, and therefore it was that Christ came to save not machines, but perverted free agents.

All such constitutional powers as were requisite or can be conceived necessary for man's accountability do still remain. The natural power of man is a matter of inspection and consciousness. We see it in others; we feel it in ourselves. We have still perception, reason, conscience, association, abstraction, memory. All these were possessed by man when he was constituted a free agent, and they all do now in fact exist. So far as our natural and constitutional powers are concerned, there is no difference betwixt us and Adam. The difference lies in this, that Adam, while in a state of innocency, put forth these powers in a right direction, while we all exert them perversely, although by the spontaneous energy of the mind. Therefore, the fact that man is a free agent is as much a matter of notoriety, and as generally known and understood, as the qualities of the inferior animals; as that a lion is a lion, or a lamb is a lamb. It is just as plain that we have the faculties necessary to free action as that we have five senses. These were all that were ever put into Adam. We have just as many as he had, neither more nor less; and, if you take away any one of them, you do to that extent take away the responsibility of the individual; at least, such is the doctrine in all human courts of justice, though some would persuade us it is otherwise in the righteous court of Heaven.

I have now finished the argument in confirmation of the doctrine of the Confession of Faith, so far as the confirmation is derived from the nature of things.

The interpretation given by Dr. Wilson goes up stream. It is against the whole constitution of the universe. It is rary to the common sense and intuitive perceptions of

man. There is a deep and a universal consciousness in all men as to the freedom of choice, and in denying this you reverse God's constitution of man. You assume that God gave a deceptive constitution to mind, or a deceptive consciousness. Now, I think that God is as honest in his moral world as he is in the natural world. I believe that in our consciousness he tells the truth; and that the natural constitution, universal feelings and perceptions of men, are the voice of God speaking the truth; and, if the truth is not here, where may we expect to find it?

My next argument is to show that, in view of such reasoning, the whole Church of God has set her seal to this doctrine; and that what has been termed a slander upon her fair fame, so far from being a slander, will turn out to be a glorious truth; and that the demonstration of it will have wiped off from her fame a foul stigma, which was cast upon it by a misinterpretation of her standards.

I affirm, then, in support of my exposition of the Confession, that the received doctrine of the Church, from the primitive age down to this day, is, that man is a free agent, in possession of such natural powers as are adequate to a compliance with every requirement of God.

But Dr. Wilson has said, What are the opinions of these writers to us? What have we to do with them? I answer that the opinions of great and good men in the Church, showing how the Church from generation to generation has understood the Bible, is a light in which both he and I have reason to rejoice. And, if I shall bring the united testimony of the talent, learning and piety, of the Church, in support of my exposition, I am willing to run the risk of going to Synod. I shall, therefore, submit to the Presbytery a series of quotations from the fathers, as I find them collected by

Dr. Scott, in his remarks upon Tomline. I take his quotations as correct, not having the originals in my possession, by which to verify them. I presume Dr. Wilson will admit their authenticity.

It is, however, to be remembered, and noted carefully in reading this testimony of the fathers, that by "*free will*" they mean a will free as opposed to the coërcion of fate; the supposed necessity of a series of natural causes, by which the wills of God and man were controlled. The question whether the will is free in a moral sense, as prone to evil since the fall, or impartial and unbiased, had not then come up in the Church. The moral bias to evil was admitted,— taken for granted,— and not publicly controverted till the time of Pelagius. Their doctrine of free will, therefore, is not the Pelagian or Arminian doctrine, but the anti-fatalism doctrine of mind free as uncoërced in choice, and with the power always of contrary choice,— that is, the equal power of choosing good or evil, life or death,— and in this view I begin with Justin Martyr, A. D. 140.

But lest any one should imagine that I am asserting that things happen by a necessity of fate, because I have said that things are foreknown, I proceed to refute that opinion also. That punishments and chastisements and good rewards are given according to the worth of the action of every one, having learnt it from the prophets, we declare to be true; since if it were not so, but all things to happen according to FATE, nothing would be in our power; for, if it were decreed by fate that one should be good and another bad, no praise would be due to the former, or blame to the latter. And again, if mankind had not the power by free will to avoid what is disgraceful, and to choose what is good, they would not be responsible for their actions. — p. 13.

Because God from the beginning endowed angels and men with free will, they justly receive punishment of their sins in everlasting fire. For it is the nature of every one who is born to be capable of virtue and vice; for nothing would deserve praise, if it has not the power of turning itself away. — p. 25.

This language of Justin is as plain as it can be. That to free agency and accountability the *natural ability of choice, with power to the contrary*, is indispensable.

TATIAN, A. D. 172. — Free will destroyed us. Being free, we became *slaves;* we were *sold*, because of *sin*. No evil proceeds from God. We have produced wickedness; but those who have produced it have it in their *power again to remove it.* — p. 31 [that is, the natural power of choosing life or death].

IRENÆUS, A. D. 178. — But man being endowed with reason, and in this respect like to God, — being made free in his will, and having power over himself, — is the cause that sometimes he becomes wheat and sometimes chaff. Wherefore he will also be justly condemned; because, being made rational, he lost true reason: and living irrationally, he opposed the justice of God, delivering himself up to every earthly spirit, and serving all lusts. — p. 35.

But if some men were bad by nature (that is, by a natural necessity) and others good, neither the good would deserve praise, for they were created so, nor would the bad deserve blame, being born so. But, since all men are of the same nature, and *able* to lay hold of and do that which is good, and *able* to reject it again and not do it, some justly receive praise, even from men, who act according to good laws, and some much more from God; and obtain deserved testimony of generally choosing and persevering in that which is good; but others are blamed, and receive the deserved reproach of rejecting that which is just and good. And therefore the prophets enjoined men to do justice and perform good works. — p. 42.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 194. — Neither praise nor dispraise, nor honors nor punishments, would be just, if the soul had not the power of desiring and rejecting, if vice were involuntary. — p. 54.

As, therefore, he is to be commended who uses his power in leading a virtuous life; so much more is he to be venerated and adored who has given us this free and sovereign power, and has permitted us to live, not having allowed what we choose or what we avoid to be subject to a slavish necessity. — p. 54.

TERTULLIAN, A. D. 200. — I find that man was formed by God with free will and with power over himself, observing in him no image or likeness to God more than in this respect; for he was not formed after God, who is uniform in face, bodily lines, &c., which are so various in mankind, but in that substance which he derived from God himself; that is, the soul,

answering to the form of God; and he was stamped with the freedom of his will.

The law itself, which was then imposed by God, confirmed this condition of man. For a law would not have been imposed on a person who had not in his *power the obedience due to the law; nor, again, would transgression have been threatened with death, if the contempt also of the law were not placed to the account of man's free will.*

He who should be found to be good or bad by necessity, and not voluntarily, could not with justice receive the retribution either of good or evil. —p. 64.

This demands no comment.

ORIGEN, A. D. 220.—Whence, consequently, we may understand, that we are not subject to necessity so as to be compelled by all means to do either bad or good things, although it be against our will. For if we be masters of one will, some powers, perhaps, may urge us to sin, and others assist us to safety; yet we are not compelled by necessity to act either rightly or wrongly.

According to us, there is nothing in any rational creature which is not capable of good as well as evil. There is *no nature that does not admit of good and evil, except that of God, which is the foundation of all good.*—p. 66.

We have frequently shown, in all our disputations, that the nature of rational souls is such as to be capable of good *and* evil. Every one has the power of *choosing good and choosing evil.*—p. 67.

A thing does not happen because it was foreknown; but it was foreknown because it would happen. This distinction is necessary. For if any one so interprets what was to happen as to make what was foreknown necessary, we do not agree with him; for we do not say that it was necessary for Judas to be a traitor, although it was foreknown that Judas would be a traitor. For in the prophecies concerning Judas there are complaints and accusations against him, publicly proclaiming the circumstance of his blame; but he would be free from blame, if he had been a traitor from necessity, and if it had been impossible for him to be like the other apostles.—pp. 80, 81.

CYPRIAN, A. D. 248.—Yet did he not reprove those who left him or threaten them severely, but rather, turning to the apostles, said, "Will ye *also go away?*" preserving the law, by which man, being left to his own

liberty, and endowed with free will, seeks for himself *death* or *salvation*. —p. 84.

LACTANTIUS, A. D. 306.—That man has a *free will* [that is, able to choose either way] to believe or not to believe, see in Deuteronomy, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."—p. 88.

EUSEBIUS, A. D. 315. The fault is in him who chooses, and not in God. For God has not made *nature or the substance of the soul bad;* for he who is good can make nothing but what is good. Everything is good which is according to nature (that is, as God made it). Every rational soul has naturally a good free will formed for the choice of what is good. But when a man acts wrongly, nature is not to be blamed; for what is wrong takes place not according to nature, but contrary to nature, it being the work of choice, and not of nature. For when a person who had the power of choosing what was good did not choose it, but voluntarily turned away from what is best, pursuing what was worst, what room for escape could be left him, who is become the cause of his own internal disease, having neglected the innate law, as it were, his saviour and physician?—p. 91.

In all these quotations, I repeat, the words of these fathers must be expounded with regard to the object at which their writings were directed. Let it not be forgotten that the first heresy which vexed the Church after the days of the apostles was the pagan notion of fate, or such a necessary concatenation of cause and effect as was above the will both of gods and men,—the very gods themselves had no power to resist it. The same notion was involved in the heresy of the Gnostics, who held that all sin lay in matter, and that man was a sinner from necessity; and of the Manicheans, who held that all sin was in the created substance of the mind. Now, in resisting these heretics, these fathers maintained with zeal the doctrine of free will,—meaning thereby, not an unbiased will, but a will free from the necessity of fate; for the philosophers, and the Gnostics, and the Manicheans, all held the doctrine of man's natural inability.

The philosophers derived it from fate; the Gnostics, from the corruption of matter; the Manicheans, from the constitution and nature of the soul. This was the first great attack upon the truth on which these venerable men were called to fix their sanctified vision, and it was against these several versions of error that they bore their testimony in favor of free will.

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, A. D. 348. — The soul has free will: the devil, indeed, may suggest, but he has not also the power to compel contrary to the will. He suggests the thought of fornication, — if you be willing, you accept it; if unwilling, you reject it; for if you committed fornication *by necessity*, why did God prepare a hell? If you acted justly by *nature* [that is, necessity], and not according to your own free choice, why did God prepare unutterable rewards? — p. 103.

HILARY, A. D. 304. — The excuse of a certain natural necessity in crimes is not to be admitted. For the serpent might have been innocent, who *himself stops his ears that they may be deaf.* — p. 110.

There is not any necessity of sin in the nature of men, but the practice of sin arises from the desires of the will, and the pleasures of vice.

EPIPHANIUS, A. D. 360. — How does he seem to retain the freedom of his will in this world? For to believe, or not to believe, is in our own power. But where it is in our power to believe or not to believe, it is in our power to act rightly or to sin, to do good or to do evil.

BASIL, A. D. 370. — They attribute to the heavenly bodies the causes of those things that depend on every one's choice, — I mean habits of virtue and of vice.

If the origin of virtuous or vicious actions be not in ourselves, but there is an *innate necessity*, there is no need of legislators to prescribe what we are to do, and what we are to avoid; there is no need of judges to honor virtue or punish wickedness. For it is not the injustice of the thief or murderer, who *could not restrain* his hand even if he would, because of the insuperable necessity that urges him to the actions. — p. 116.

GREGORY OF NAZIANZEN, A. D. 370. — The good derived from nature has no claim to acceptance; but that which proceeds from *free will* is deserving of praise. What merit has fire in burning? for the burning comes *by nature* [that is, necessity]. What merit has water in descending? for this it has from the Creator. What merit has snow in being cold? or the sun shining? for it shines whether it will or not. — p. 124.

GREGORY OF NYSSA. — Let any consider how great the facility to what is bad — gliding into sin spontaneously, without any effort. For that any one should become wicked, depends solely upon choice; and the will is often sufficient for the completion of wickedness. — p. 127.

AMBROSE, A. D. 374. — We are not constrained to obedience by a servile necessity, but by free will, whether we lean to virtue or to vice.

No one is under obligation to commit a fault, unless he inclines to it from his own will. — p. 131.

JEROME, A. D. 392. — No seed is of itself bad, for God made all things good; but bad seed has arisen from those who by their own will are bad, which happens from will and not from nature [that is, necessity]. — p. 141.

That we profess free will, and can turn it either to a good or bad purpose, according to our determination, is owing to His grace, who made us after His image and likeness.

We have now come to Augustine. And now it will be necessary to avail myself of the remarks I made on the laws of exposition. I said that it was necessary, in order to a right exposition of any ancient instrument in the Church, to take into view the controversies which prevailed at the time of its composition. We must now apply this especially to Augustine. Down to his time, the free will and natural ability of man were held by the whole Church, against the heretical notions of a blind fate, of material depravity, and of depravity created in the substratum of the soul. The great effort, hitherto, had been to maintain the liberty or uncoërced action of the mind in choice, with the power of contrary choice. But now Pelagius arose, and denied the doctrine of the fall; and from this time it became necessary, not so much to prove *natural ability*, which Pelagius admitted, as to prove a *moral inability*, which he denied.

The Church had now to enter upon a new controversy, and to fix her eye upon the question, What were the consequences of the fall? The question of free agency was no longer to be

argued, for that was not now controverted. Both Augustine and Pelagius admitted it. The question which now exists between Dr. Wilson and myself was not at issue between them. The question, indeed, turned on the same words, namely, free will,— but it did not mean the same thing. The question between them was, Is the will unbiased? — is it in equilibrium? It was not, whether it was free from the necessity of fate, or the coërcion of matter, or of created depravity,— but the question was, Has the fall given it a bias? has it struck it out of equilibrium, and struck the balance wrong? Pelagius said, No. Augustine said, Yes; and while, in opposition to Pelagius, he denied *free will* [meaning unbiased will], he was as strong in favor of free will in the other sense as any of the fathers before him; as strong as I am; — so that, if I am a Pelagian, Augustine was a Pelagian, although his whole strength was exerted against Pelagius. If what I teach is Pelagianism, then Augustine, and Calvin, and Luther, and all the best writers of the Church in this age, have been Pelagians, except the few who deny natural ability.

Augustine, A. D. 398. — Free will is given to the soul, which they who endeavor to weaken by trifling reasoning are blind to such a degree that they do not even understand that they say those vain and sacrilegious things with their own will. — p. 176.

Which free will, if God had not given, there could be no just sentence of punishment, nor reward for right conduct, nor a divine precept to repent of sins, nor pardon of sins, which God has given us through our Lord Jesus Christ; because he who does not sin with his will does not sin at all. Which sins, as I have said, unless we had free will, would not be sins. Wherefore, if it be evident that there is no sin where there is not free will, I desire to know what harm the soul has done, that it should be punished by God, or repent of sin, or deserve pardon, since it has been guilty no sin. — p. 214.

hat there is free will, and that from thence every one sins if he wills, hat he does not sin if he does not will, I prove not only by the divine

Scriptures, which you do not understand, but in the words of your own Manes himself: hear, then, concerning free will, first, the Lord himself when he speaks of two trees, which you yourself have mentioned: hear him saying, "Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt." When, therefore, he says, "do this or do that," he shows power, not nature. For no one, except God, can make a tree, BUT EVERY ONE HAS IT IN HIS WILL, EITHER TO CHOOSE THOSE THINGS THAT ARE GOOD AND BE A GOOD TREE, OR TO CHOOSE THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BAD AND BE A BAD TREE. — p. 215.

The next authority I shall adduce is that of Luther, who holds that, in the exercise of his own faculties, the mind chooses, by its very constitution, just as much as it thinks by the exertion of its intellect.

There is (he says) no restraint either on the divine or human will. In both cases the will does what it does, whether good or bad, simply, and as at perfect liberty, in the exercise of its own faculty,— so long as the operative grace of God is absent from us, everything we do has in it a mixture of evil; and, therefore, of necessity, our works avail not to salvation. Here I do not mean a *necessity of compulsion*, but a necessity as to the *certainty of the event*. A man who has not the Spirit of God does evil willingly and spontaneously. He is not violently impelled, against his will, as a thief is to the gallows. — *Milnor*, vol. v. cent. 16, chap. 12, sec. 2.

Thus we see that it was Luther's sentiment, that depravity does not destroy the innate liberty of the will, or its natural power, although it corrupts and perverts its exercise.

I now proceed to quote from Calvin, who holds that necessity is voluntary,— that is, that the will is under no such necessity as destroys its own power of choice; that there was no other yoke upon man but voluntary servitude; and I shall show that the doctrine for which I contend is not new divinity, but old Calvinism.

Calvin says: — "That God is voluntary in his goodness, Satan in his wickedness, and man in his sin." "We must,

therefore, observe," he says, "that man, having been corrupted by the fall, sins voluntarily, not with reluctance or constraint; with the strongest propensity of disposition, not with violent coërcion; with the bias of his own passions, and not with external compulsion." He quotes Bernard, as agreeing with Augustine, in saying, "Among all the animals, man alone is free; and yet, by the intervention of sin, he suffers a species of violence, but from the will, not from nature; so that he is not thereby deprived of *his innate liberty.*" Both Augustine and the Reformers speak, indeed, of the bondage of the will, and of the necessity of sinning, and of the impossibility that a natural man should turn and save himself without grace; but they explain themselves to mean that *certainty of continuance in sin* which arises from a perverted free agency, and not from any natural impossibility. For "this necessity," they say expressly, "is voluntary." "We are oppressed with a yoke, but no other than that of voluntary servitude; therefore, our servitude renders us miserable, and our will renders us inexcusable." —See *Calvin's Instit.* Book II. ch. III. sec. 5.

I always exclude coërcion, for we sin voluntarily, or it would not be sin unless it were voluntary. — *Commentary on Rom.* 7.

My next quotation is from Turretin, the apostle of orthodoxy, whose works are the text-book in the Princeton Seminary:

The question is not concerning the power or natural faculty of will, "a *qua est ipsum velle vel nolle,*" which may be called, first power and the material principle of moral action; for this always remains in man, and by it he is distinguished from the brutes.

"*Velle vel nolle*" means, in the technics of the day, the power to choose or not to choose in every case; and this be

s remains in man in every condition, as by it he is
ed from the brutes.

l power of willing, in whatever condition we may be, is never
from us, insomuch as by it we are distinguished from the
999.

my next witness. He was contemporary with the
of Divines at Westminster. He quotes the follow-
probation from Twiss:

y to do what is pleasing and acceptable to God is not a
oral inability; for no faculty of our nature is taken away
iginal sin: as saith Augustine, — It has taken from no man
discerning truth. The power still remains, by which we can
e choose. We say that the natural power of doing anything
ur will is preserved to all, but no moral power.
SPOON. — The sinner will, perhaps, say, But why should the
severe? The law may be right in itself, but it is hard, or
e, for me. I have no strength. I cannot love the Lord with
I am altogether insufficient for that which is good. O, that
consider what sort of inability you were under to keep the
s of God. Is it natural, or is it moral? Is it really want
is it only want of will? Is it anything more than the
corruption of your hearts, which is itself criminal, and the
ctual transgressions? Have you not natural faculties and
, will and affections, a wonderful frame of body and a
bers? What is it that hinders them all from being conse-
Are they not as proper in every respect for his service as
pose? When you are commanded to love God with all your
ly is not commanding more than you can pay. For, if you
im, you will give it to something else that is far from being
f it. The law, then, is not impossible, in the strict and
ven to you.
vinced sinner) *will see that there is nothing to hinder his*
h every part of his duty, but an inward aversion to God,
ry essence of sin.
plexing ourselves with the meaning of the imputation of

in the sinner lies in his *aversion to that which is good.*—pp. 14, 15.

Dr. Dickinson, a cotemporary of Dr. Witherspoon in New Jersey, and a cotemporary also with Dr. Greene in the early part of his life, has this sentiment on the point of discussion: "Let inability be properly denominated, and called obstinacy." This was a divine of admitted and unimpeachable orthodoxy, a man of eminent abilities, a friend to revivals of religion, and one of the pillars of the Presbyterian Church.

President Davis, the pioneer and planter of Presbyterianism in Virginia, afterwards President of Princeton College, one of the most pungent, popular, and successful of preachers, inquires, "What is inability but unwillingness?"

Edwards the younger, President of Union College, was a Presbyterian, and what does he say? To the question, whether the moral inability which his father taught can be removed by the sinner, his answer was: "Yes; and the moment you deny this, you change the whole character of the inability, together with the whole character of the man; for then his inability ceases to be obstinacy, and becomes physical incapacity."

WITSIUS.—He [Adam] sinned with judgment and will, to which faculties liberty, as opposed to compulsion, is so peculiar, nay, essential, that there can be neither judgment nor will unless they be free.—Vol. I. p. 198.

THE ANDOVER DECLARATION, subscribed by the professors.—God's decrees perfectly consist with human liberty, God's universal agency with the agency of man, and man's dependence with his accountability. Man has understanding and corporeal strength to do all that God requires of him; so that nothing but the sinner's aversion to holiness prevents his salvation.—*Laws*, p. 9.

Dr TYLER (see National Preacher, vol. II. pp. 161, 162).—Several

doctrines of the Gospel have been regarded by some as presenting insuperable obstacles to their salvation.

The doctrine of *Human Depravity* has been thus regarded. "If I am *entirely depraved,*" the sinner sometimes says, "then I am utterly helpless. It is beyond my power to do anything which God requires; and, consequently, it is totally impossible that I should comply with the terms of salvation revealed in the Gospel." This representation proceeds upon an entire misapprehension as to the nature of depravity. Depravity does not destroy moral agency. It does not so impair the natural faculties of man as to disable him from doing his duty, if he will. It has its seat in the heart, and consists in a perverse and sinful inclination. When we say that man is entirely depraved, we do not mean that he is a poor, unfortunate being, who is commanded to do impossibilities; but we mean that he is a guilty rebel, who voluntarily refuses to yield allegiance to the God who made him. We mean that he loves sin, and is unwilling to abandon it; that he hates his duty, and is unwilling to perform it; that he dislikes the terms of salvation, and is unwilling to comply with them. We do not mean that all the powers and faculties of his soul are so impaired that he *could not* do his duty if he *would;* but we mean that he *will not* do his duty when he *can,—that, in the full possession of all the powers of moral agency, and with perfect ability to comply with the terms of salvation, if he will, he chooses the road that leads to death, and will not come to Christ that he might have life.* This supposes no difficulty in the way of his salvation, except what lies in a perverse and obstinate will.

Again: the doctrine of *Regeneration* is supposed to imply an insuperable obstacle in the way of the sinner's salvation. We often hear the sinner reasoning thus: "If I must be born again, in order to enter into the kingdom of God,—and if this change is exclusively the work of the Holy Spirit, a work which he is under no obligations to perform, and which my own efforts will never accomplish,—then there is a difficulty in the way of my salvation which is beyond my power to remove. It does not depend on my will, but on the will of God, whether I shall be saved." But here again the sinner labors under an entire misapprehension as to the nature of the change in question, and as to the reason why this change is necessary. What is it to be born again? Simply to be *made willing* to do what God requires. It is thus represented in the Scriptures: *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* Why is it necessary that men should be born again? Not because they are *unable* to do their duty, if they will; but because they are *unwilling* to do it. It is their *depravity*

which renders this supernatural change necessary. But their depravity is not their calamity merely, but their *crime*. It consists, as we have seen, in a perverse inclination, — in a voluntary and obstinate refusal to yield obedience to the reasonable commands of Jehovah. What the sinner needs, therefore, is to have this perverse inclination changed; that is, to be made *willing* to do what God requires. The necessity of this change, therefore, supposes no obstacle in the way of his salvation, except *his own unwillingness* to do his duty.

Dr. Woods (Letters to Dr. Ware, ch. v. p. 183). — According to our views, there can be no such necessity in the case as implies force or coërcion, or anything contrary to perfect voluntariness.

What, then, is the freedom which belongs to a moral agent? It is freedom from that physical coërcion or force, which either causes actions that are not voluntary, or prevents those which the agent chooses to perform.

I grant that man has a power of choosing between different courses, and of yielding to either of two opposite motives. — *Remarks on Ware*, pp. 34, 35, 36.

Men have by nature the constitution, they have all the faculties, essential to moral agency.

(Third Letter to Dr. Beecher, — Spirit of the Pilgrims, vol. VI. No. 1, pp. 19—22.) — I have just received your sermon on Dependence and Free Agency; and, according to a suggestion in your letter to me, I shall proceed to remark on some of the topics which it introduces.

Between your views and mine, on the subject of man's *ability* and *inability*, there is not, so far as I can judge, any real disagreement. You do indeed sometimes use language different from that which I am accustomed to use. But, when you come to explain your language, as you do in your second letter, and in your sermon just published, you show that you have a meaning which I can fully adopt. In the first place, you do what many who make much of man's ability neglect to do; that is, you clearly make the distinction between *natural* ability and inability, and *moral*. *Natural* ability you explain to be "the intellectual and moral faculties which God has given to men, commensurate with his requirements;" — "the plenary powers of a free agent;" — "such a capacity for obedience as creates perfect obligation to obey." You say, it is "what the law means, when it commands us to love God with all our *heart*, and *soul*, and *mind*, and *strength*." The sinner, according to your representation, under no *natural impossibility* to obey God; that is, it is not impossible *him* to obey God in the same sense in which it is impossible for him

"to create a world." To all this I fully subscribe. Here, then, is no room for debate. I have been acquainted with ministers who have differed widely in their language respecting human ability, and who have had much debate on the subject, and have seemed to entertain opposite opinions. But I doubt not they would all coincide with the above statements. They would all admit that man has those intellectual and moral faculties which constitute him a moral agent, justly accountable for his actions, and under perfect obligation to obey the divine law. But all would not judge it best to give to these faculties the name of *ability*, or even of *natural ability*. In regard to the words by which the sentiment held by them all may most properly be expressed, there would be a difference. And would not this be the only difference? And would not any dispute on the subject be *logomachy*? Suppose a minister of Christ does not like the expression, that sinners have a *natural ability* to obey the divine law. But he admits that they have those faculties of mind which constitute them moral and accountable beings, put them under a perfect obligation to obey, and bring on them a just condemnation for disobedience. That is, he admits all that you mean by *natural ability*, though he does not use the language. Respecting this you and he may differ. But, the moment you lay aside the word *ability*, and use other words expressing exactly what you mean by this, the difference between you and him is ended. You both believe that sinners have all the powers necessary to moral agents, and that they are under perfect obligation to do what God commands: though you may, perhaps, attach more importance to this view of the subject, and may give it more importance in your preaching, than he thinks proper.

The same as to inability. I find, from your explanations, that you believe the sinner to be the subject of all the inability which I have ever attributed to him. You say that man, in his unrenewed state, is "destitute of holiness and prone to evil;" "that he has an inflexible bias of will to evil;" "a sinfulness of heart and obliquity of will, which overrule and pervert his free agency only to purposes of evil;" that he has "an obstinate will, which as really and certainly demands the interposition of special divine influence as if his inability were natural;" that "*his natural ability never avails, either alone, or by any power of truth, or help of man, to recover him from alienation to obedience;*" that "the special renovating influence of the Spirit is indispensable to his salvation;" "that motives and obligation are by his obstinacy swept away;" and "that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convince him of sin, to enlighten his mind, to renew his will, and to persuade and enable him to embrace Christ;"

that "the powers requisite to free agency, which still remain in degenerate man, are wholly perverted, and hopeless of recovery without the grace of God;" "that men, as sinners, are dependent on Christ for a willingness to do anything which will save their souls." You hold it to be "a fact, that mind, once ruined, never recovers itself;" "that the disease rages on, unreclaimed by its own miseries, and only exasperated by rejected remedies;" that "the main-spring of the soul for holy action is gone, and that divine influence is the only substitute."

You not only make these just and moving representations of the state of unregenerate man, but you expressly speak of him as having an inability to obey God. You make the "distinction between the ability of man as a free agent, and his inability as a sinner," and say "it is a distinction singularly plain, obvious to popular apprehension, and sanctioned by the common sense of all men." You fully justify the language of the Bible in ascribing to man "inability to obey the Gospel." You quote the passages which declare that "the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God; that they who are in the flesh cannot please God;" and you say the inability spoken of means the impossibility of becoming holy by any philosophical culture of the natural powers, or by any possible modification of our depraved nature; though you very properly take care to guard us against supposing that the inability of sinners implies "an absolute natural impossibility," or has "a passive, material import." You say, also, that "no language is more frequent in the common intercourse of men than the terms *unable*, *cannot* and the like, to express slight or determined and unchanging aversion; and that the same use of these terms pervades the Bible;" that "inability, meaning only voluntary aversion, or permanent choice or disinclination, is ascribed to God, to Christ, and to good men, in as strong terms as inability to obey the Gospel is ascribed to sinners."

In regard to the above-cited representations of yours, I see no ground for controversy. I am aware that, in your preaching, you are accustomed to say less frequently than many others that sinners cannot believe and obey. But, even if you should think it best, as some do, to go further, and wholly to avoid expressions of that kind, still, while in other words you attribute to the sinner everything which I and others mean by such expressions, there would be no difference except in words. In the unmeasured abundance of remarks which have lately been made on the subject bility and inability, it has not been always remembered that the prin- if not the only difference which exists among thinking and candid s verbal. *If this should be kept in mind, as it ought to be, and if*

men who are going to dispute would just stop to inquire what they are going to dispute about, it would very much narrow the ground of debate, and diminish, if not remove, the occasions of strife.

Still, I hold the question about the use of particular words to be of no small importance. Words are the usual means of conveying the thoughts of our own minds to the minds of others. If, then, our words are not well chosen, we may fail of communicating what we wish, and may communicate something very different; and so the gift of speech, instead of contributing to useful purposes, may become positively hurtful.

It is not my design to controvert any of the positions which you lay down on the subject of ability and inability. Putting a candid and fair construction on your language, and considering you as agreeing with those excellent authors to whom you refer with approbation, I am satisfied, as I have before said, that there is no material difference between your opinions and mine on this subject. My remarks, therefore, will relate chiefly, if not wholly, to modes of expression; though not so much to any which you employ, as to those employed by others. There is danger, I think, of a wrong impression being made on the minds of men, from the manner in which some preachers speak respecting the sinner's ability. And although there is much in what you have lately given to the public which is well calculated to guard against this danger, I humbly conceive that still greater caution in your manner of treating the subject would do no hurt.

Dr. Bellamy. — "The law is exactly upon a level with our natural capacities; it only requires us to love God with all our hearts. Hence, as to natural capacity, all mankind are capable of a perfect conformity to this law; for the law requires of no man any more than to love God with all his heart. The sinning angels have the same natural capacities now as they had before they fell; they have the same faculties, called the understanding and will; they are still the same beings, as to their natural powers. Their temper, indeed, is different, but their capacity is the same; therefore, as to natural capacity, they are as capable of a perfect conformity to the law of their Creator as ever they were. So Adam, after his fall, had the same soul that he had before, as to his natural capacities, though of a very different temper; and therefore, in that respect, was as capable of a perfect conformity to the law as ever. And it is plainly the case, that all mankind, as to their natural capacities, are capable of a perfect conformity to the law, from this, — that when sinners are converted, they have no new natural faculties, though they have a new temper; and when they

come to love God with all their hearts in heaven, still they will have the same hearts, as to their natural faculties, and may in this respect be justly looked upon as the very same beings. When, therefore, men cry out against the holy law of God, which requires us only to love him with all our hearts, and say, "It is not just in God to require more than we can do, and then threaten to damn us for not doing," they ought to stay a while, and consider what they say, and tell what they mean by their can do; for it is plain that the law is exactly upon a level with our natural capacities, and that in this respect we are fully capable of a perfect conformity thereto. And it will be impossible for us to excuse ourselves by an inability arising from any other quarter." "And finally, this want of a good temper, *this voluntary and stubborn aversion to God, and love to themselves, the world and sin, is all that renders the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit so absolutely necessary, or, indeed, at all needful, to recover and bring them to love God with all their hearts.*"— *True Religion Delineated*, Disc. I. sec. 3.

Dr. Samuel Hopkins. — "It has been thought and urged by many that fallen man cannot be wholly blamable for his moral depravity, because he has lost his power to do that which is good, and is wholly unable to change and renew his depraved heart. But what has been before observed must be here kept in mind, — that man has not lost any of his natural powers of understanding and will, &c., by becoming sinful. He has lost his inclination, or is wholly without any inclination to serve and obey his Maker, and entirely opposed to it. In this his sinfulness consists; and in this lies his blame and guilt, and in nothing else; and the stronger and more fixed the opposition to the law of God is, and the further he is from any inclination to obey, the more blamable and inexcusable he is. Nothing but the opposition of the heart, or will of man, to coming to Christ, is, or can be, in the way of his coming. So long as this continues, and his heart is wholly opposed to Christ, he cannot come to him; it is impossible, and will continue so, until his unwillingness, his opposition to coming to Christ, be removed by a change and renovation of his heart by divine grace, and be made *willing* in the day of God's power." "Nothing is necessary but the renovation of the *will*, in order to set everything right in the human soul." — *System of Divinity*, Part I. ch. 8, and Part II. ch. 4.

Dr. Smalley. — "The whole Bible evidently goes upon the supposition that man is a free agent; and so do all mankind in their treatment of one another." "It is certain that no natural men, except idiots, or such as are delirious, are totally incapable of good works for want of understand

ing." "The power of will is not the deficiency in natural men." "Were men destitute of understanding to know what is right, or destitute of power to choose according to their own disposition, or destitute of members to act according to their own choice, they would so far not be proper subjects of commands, and no blame would lie upon them for not obeying. But no such powers of moral agency are the things wanting in natural men. They have hands and heads sufficiently good, and a sufficient power to will whatever is agreeable to them. All they want is a good heart. Their inability is therefore their sin, and not their excuse." — *Sermons*, 10, 16.

Dr. Stephen West. — It therefore appeareth that all those voluntary exercises and affections which are required of us in the divine law may be said to be *in our power*. There is no opposition to any obedience which is claimed by the divine law, except it be in our wills. — *On Moral Agency*, Part I. sec. 2.

Dr. Nathan Strong. — Here the proud heart objects. Can this be cause of rejoicing, that I am in the hand of a most absolute sovereign? Is this consistent with my dignity as a rational creature and a free agent? Truly it is. If thy reason be exercised right, all its dictates will be in conformity to the sovereign counsel and acting of God. If thy heart be opposed to infinite reason, or prejudices thy reason, it is the depravity of thy heart, and not the sovereignty of God, which degrades, and takes dignity away from thee. Neither is thy dignity as a free agent lessened. Art thou not as free in sinning as the holy angels and holy men are in loving and obeying God? Is not sin thy choice? Dost thou not sin because thou lovest sin? The sovereignty of God will never destroy thy freedom as a rational agent, but an evil use of this freedom hath made thee base, and without repentance will be the means of thy misery forever. — *Sermons*, vol. I. ser. 4.

Dr. Dwight. — "The nature of this inability to obey the law of God is, in my own view, completely indicated by the word *indisposition*, or the word *disinclination*." "The real and only reason why we do not perform this obedience [perfect obedience to the law of God] is, that we do not possess such a disposition as that of angels. Our natural powers are plainly sufficient: our inclination only defective." "There is no more difficulty in obeying God than in doing anything else to which our inclination is opposed with equal strength and obstinacy." "Indisposition to come to Christ is the true and the only difficulty which lies in our way. Those who *cannot* come, therefore, are those, and those only, who *will* not. The words *can* and *cannot* are used in the Scriptures, just as they are used

in the common intercourse of mankind, to express *willingness* or *unwillingness*." "From these observations it is evident that the disobedience of mankind is their own fault." And "the degree of our inability to obey the divine law does in no case lessen our guilt." And "these observations teach us the propriety of urging sinners to immediate repentance." — *Theology*, Sermon 100.

The Assembly's narrative for 1819 declares that the destruction of the finally impenitent is charged "wholly upon their own unwillingness to accept of the merciful provision made in the Gospel."

Rev. John Matthews, D.D., Theological Professor of South Hanover Seminary (commended by Dr. Wilson as correct). Our case, though in some respects it bears a striking resemblance to those who sleep in the grave, yet in others is widely different. They make no opposition to the active pursuits of life. Nor does any blame attach to them on account of their insensibility. Not so, however, with us. We have eyes, but we see not; ears, but we hear not; we have, indeed, all the intellectual faculties and moral powers which belong to rational beings; but they are *devoted* to the world, they are *employed* against God and his government. Instead of love, the heart is influenced by enmity against God. Instead of repentance, there is hardness of heart. Instead of faith, by which the Saviour is received, there is unbelief, by which, with all his blessings, he is rejected. We possess, indeed, all the natural faculties which God demands in his service; but we are without the moral power. We have not the disposition, the desire, to employ them in his service. This want of disposition, instead of furnishing the shadow of excuse for our unbelief and impenitence, is the very essence of sin, the demonstration of our guilt. Here, then, is work for Omnipotence itself. Here is not only insensibility to be quickened, but here is opposition, here is enmity, to be destroyed. The art and maxims of men may change, in some degree, the outward appearances, but they never can reach the seat of the disease. There it will remain, and there it will operate, after all that created wisdom and power can do. That power which can start the pulse of spiritual life within us must reach and control the very origin of thought, must change our very motives. Our case would be hopeless, if our restoration depended on [illegible] ed efforts of created agents.

I now beg leave to adduce the testimony of Dr. Wilson himself. This passage from Dr. Matthews goes the whole length of all that I hold in respect to natural ability. If this is not heresy, it is all I mean, and all I teach, or ever did teach. If Dr. Wilson is not opposed to this, then he has misunderstood me, and he and I think alike. If he agrees to this, then he and I do agree; for I challenge man or angel to find anything like a discrepancy, and I challenge him to find any. That he does agree to this is manifest, and two things which are equal to the same are equal to each other. In the notes he says:

> Thus, it is evident, that without conference or correspondence, or even personal acquaintance, there are ministers in the Presbyterian Church who can and do speak the same things, who can and do speak the language of the true Reformers in all ages. May the Lord increase their number, and bind up the breach of his people!

My argument is this: — The fact that these writers held the opinions which they have here declared I do not bring as proof absolute that the Confession of Faith teaches as they held; but that it is altogether probable that the framers of that instrument, belonging to this class of men, and standing in the same rank with them, did not teach doctrines in direct contradiction to this. I have brought down these testimonies to the present time, because these expositions throw light upon the pages of the Confession, by showing the impression which it made on these writers, and the sense in which they received it. It would be one of the strongest anomalies in the whole history of the human mind, that men who knew all about the controversy of Augustine and Pelagius, as well as the controversy which preceded, should, when they sat down to make a Confession of Faith, go directly against the whole stream of the faith of the Church.

Such is the testimony of the Christian fathers, and the received doctrine of the Orthodox Church, from the beginning to this day. I now add:

THAT THE BIBLE TEACHES THE FREE AGENCY AND NATURAL ABILITY OF MAN TO OBEY OR DISOBEY, UNCOERCED BY ANY NATURAL NECESSITY OR HINDRANCE, AS HIS QUALIFICATION FOR MORAL GOVERNMENT, AND THE FOUNDATION OF HIS OBLIGATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

1. That the Bible has been understood to teach this by the universal Orthodox Church, is a strong presumptive argument that the Bible does teach it.

It was made to be understood by fallen man, and by common uneducated minds, in respect to its most vital doctrines; and there is no doctrine more immediately fundamental than that of free agency as the ground of obligation and accountability. Now, the impression which the Bible makes on common minds, who, unsophisticated by theory, read and receive its impression, is, that there remains to man, in the estimation of Heaven, the capacity of choosing whom he will serve, God or the world, and of choosing life or death; and that his obligation to choose the good and refuse the evil originates in their constitutional power of choice, with power of contrary choice. This is the popular feeling and belief of those who read the Bible.

But, if the uninstructed may be supposed to mistake, it was certainly intended to be intelligible to the most talented, learned, and holy men, who make the study and translation and exposition of it their professional and habitual employment.

But, unanswerably, the Bible has been understood to teach doctrine of man's free agency and natural ability, in the ner I have above explained, by the ablest, holiest, and learned men. These, interpreting the Bible in accord

the laws of language and the best operations of intellect, have understood it to teach the natural nan as the foundation of obligation, and the moral man as consisting in a perverse will. If this so many men of talented mind, and learning, and lse, all attempts to expound the Bible are vain,— s yet a sealed book,— and all the promises of wis- ose who ask, and of guidance in judgment to the), unanswered, been scattered to the wind.

implications of the Bible teach the free agency of luding a natural ability to obey, as the qualifica- oral government, and the foundation of account-

tory precepts, the commands and prohibitions, the d punishments, the exhortations, warnings, en- expostulations, of the Bible, teach this; the oath eference that fallen man should obey rather than d the regrets and the wonder of heaven at his nd unbelief, teach the same; and the punishment, t only for what he did do that was wrong, but be- ce of this he did not do what was right,— because *turn*, did not repent, did not believe,— all imply nat such implications are multiplied throughout vill not be denied; that they do strongly imply right or of wrong choice, and are based on that is equally plain. But what would be thought of vernment that should address such language to stones, or to animals, or to machines moved by ter power? And why should they be addressed e has no more power to obey than these?

nce to commands, exhortations and entreaties, is *y a constitutional necessity*, a natural impossi-

bility of choosing right, and the disobedient choice is also the unavoidable, coërced result of a constitutional necessity, over which the will has no power, but of which it is the unavoidable effect, then choice is as much the effect of a natural *cause* as any other natural effect; and directory precepts, and rewards and penalties, and exhortations and entreaties, are as irrelevant and superfluous as if they were addressed to our appetites, or applied to secure the beating of the heart, or the circulation of the blood.

If a created constitution secures the volition, whatever it may be, what need of another apparatus to produce it? Is not one cause sufficient? and, if it were not, why add an apparatus which is totally irrelevant and powerless? The adoption of *law* and motive, then, as the means of moral government, implies irresistibly that God's unerring wisdom has not intrusted the will of men, like instinctive actions, to the guardianship of *natural causes;* and has committed it to the guidance and guardianship of law, and reward and punishment, with such capacity that choice in accordance with requirement is possible and reasonable; and contrary choice possible also, and inexcusable, and justly punishable. On this argument, we observe:

That these implications of the Bible do clearly, and in the strongest possible manner, treat the doctrine of man's free agency and natural ability to obey or disobey the Gospel as the foundation of his obligation. Implication is the most uniform and established mode of scriptural teaching, in respect to natural, mental, and moral philosophy. It teaches almost nothing by formal definitions, and regular propositions, and proofs; but assumes and takes for granted whatever truths of this kind it has occasion to recognize. But the assumptions of an inspired unerring book,—the assumptions of Him

d and organized the world, and forms and governs
–are the most powerful, unequivocal, infallible mode
;. In demonstration men may err, and come out
conclusions; but God, in his assumptions, cannot
Bible, therefore, teaches in the most direct and
nner the free agency and natural ability of men, as
ıbjects of moral government. The supposition that
ıptions of the Bible are not true, and that man,
not able to modify and diversify his choice indefi-
chooses sin or holiness by a coërcive necessity,—
not but sin when he does sin, more than rivers of
ɜr can purify themselves, and stop flowing,—and
and prefer the Creator to the creature, more than
'aters can roll back their tide to their fountains,
the credibility of the Bible as an inspired book.
all the assumptions of the Bible have been
ı a uniform and wonderful exactness.
omical, geographical, historical, chronological, and
plications, are always verified in the results of the
mination.
necessary to the credibility of the Bible that it
. If it spoke of the visible heavens in a manner
n their appearance to the eye,—and if its geog-
chronology, and natural history, were at every
by scientific investigations,—if the lion and the
he war-horse of the Bible were verified by no cor-
in nature, and all its assumption of countries
and natural productions were contradicted by
of the countries alluded to,—it would disprove
ɜy of the Bible, as an inspired book. Infidels,
is fact, have made ceaseless efforts to catch the
g somewhere in the field of natural science, and

have exulted exceedingly when they supposed they had detected a few mistakes of this description. But no sooner did the lamp of true philosophy follow the footsteps of their presumptuous ignorance, than it dissipated their premature rejoicing, by discovering the exact verity of the Bible in all its assumptions of the attributes and laws of nature.

But what would be said, if, in tracing the implications of the Bible in respect to the qualifications of mind for accountable agency and government by law, we should find them all contradicted? What if, while natural philosophy verified, mental and moral philosophy contradicted, the fundamental principles it takes for granted; the Bible assuming everywhere that man is free to choose with power of contrary choice, when in fact, as the truth is developed, it appears that he is no more able, as a free agent, to choose at all, than a spark is to strike itself out without the collision of flint and steel; and no more able to choose otherwise than he does choose, than water is to be fire, or fire water?

Christianity could not stand before such contradictions of revelation by science. It would open upon us the flood-gates of an all-pervading, irresistible infidelity. Nay, it would not stop at infidelity, — it would undermine all confidence in consciousness or argument, and terminate in universal scepticism.

Our argument against transubstantiation is, that our senses are a correct revelation of the reality and attributes of external things; that no written revelation from Heaven can contradict the testimony of this constitutional revelation by the senses concerning attributes of external objects, without supposing the conflict of contrary revelations, which would not only destroy the credibility of the Bible, but vacate all confi- in the testimony of the senses.

se implications are corroborated by the analogy of

cause and effect through all the works of God; by the common sense and universal consciousness of men; by all the results of mental analysis, uniting philosophers in the definition of free agency; and by the concession of individuals and the public sentiment of the world, as disclosed in moral government as the means of elevating society. But, if these implications of the Bible of a free agency and natural ability to obey, commensurate with law thus corroborated, are not true, it brings on the Bible overwhelming evidence of incorrect teaching; and if, on this tremendous subject, all its implications are false, the Bible fails to sustain its claims, and the whole system of revelation and its doctrines goes out in darkness.

3. The Bible does in no way contradict its own implications, by teaching the natural inability of man to render to God a holy and spiritual obedience.

It applies to fallen man, in respect to spiritual obedience, the terms *cannot*, *unable*, &c. This is not denied; it is admitted — it is insisted on. But the question is, what does the term *inability* mean, when applied to a free agent and a totally-depraved sinner? — are the terms *cannot*, *unable*, &c., used in the common language of men and in the Bible only in one sense, and that the sense of a natural impossibility? If so, the question is settled, and we are at fault. But if there are two senses in which these terms are used in common and in scriptural language, one of which means a natural impossibility, and the other respects an event possible in respect to the capacity of the agent, but prevented by a perverse choice,— then, to deny this distinction, and condense both, by an arbitrary assertion, into a natural impossibility, is to beg the question in dispute,— to do violence to the laws of exposition, and substitute assertion for

argument. Yet this, so far as I am apprized, is the course which has been adopted to disprove the natural ability of man to obey. Those passages which mean aversion and obstinacy in sin, and the certainty of his perdition without the special grace of God, are assumed to mean natural impossibility. The terms "cannot and unable," which have no reference to his capacity as a free agent, and respect only and wholly his character and obstinacy as a sinner, are quoted, unexplained and unproved in respect to their assumed meaning; and, merely by the reiteration of unexplained sound, the doctrine of moral inability is attempted to be battered down, and that of a natural inability to be established. But who does not see that I have an equal right to assume the meaning of moral inability as the only meaning of the term, and, by the power of reiterated assertion, to beat down my adversary, as he has to battle me with unexplained words, taken for granted, by force of mere assertion; and that both of us, in doing so, would violate the laws of philology and correct controversy? As soon as the meaning of the texts applied to man and quoted to prove his natural inability are explained, it appears that they respect his character as a sinner, and not his constitution as a free agent, and are nothing to the purpose to prove what they are quoted to prove. If they mean a moral inability, the mere voluntary aversion of a free agent to obey the Gospel, then they do not mean or teach the natural impossibility of believing; and the moral inability of the sinner may be perfectly consistent with the natural ability of the free agent.

With this lamp in our hand, all becomes clear. Whenever the Bible speaks of inability in moral things, it speaks of the sin of the will, its aversion to good. Yet where has Dr. Wilson, in the whole course of his argument in support

arges against me, ever once defined the term *can-*
/here has he recognized this obvious distinction, and
er of its application? He has insisted on a single
of the term, which meaning he assumes, and then
l right of explanation. As soon as the word is ex-
ie is gone. These words, like all other words, are
l by the principles of exposition, by the established
tendi, and not by their sound on the tympanum of
or else Jesus Christ might as well have spoken
nen who understood nothing but English. Take an
ı on this subject: Suppose an assault was commit-
case is carried into court, where the assault is ad-
l the only question arising is a question of damages.
appears and is asked, "Did you see this assault?"
w A strike B." "How hard did he strike him?"
now: I can't exactly tell *how* hard; A was a very
ın." "O!" cries the lawyer in favor of A, "if
ery nervous man, he must have been too feeble to
nuch." Another witness is introduced and asked,
l did A strike B?" "I can't exactly tell," he says.
t of a man was A?" "O! he was a very stout,
n; a very nervous, athletic man." "Then," says
y on the other side, "if he was a nervous man, no
nust have hurt my client exceedingly, and he is
heavy damages." On this a dispute arises as to
ıy, and it turns on the meaning of the word *ner-*
of the attorneys brings into court Webster's
and shows that *nervous* means "of weak nerve,
d there he stops. Would this settle the question?
determine the meaning of the testimony? Just
word *inability*. It has two meanings, according

as it is applied. It may either mean a total want of power, or a total want of inclination.

4. The subject and the circumstances of the case, forbid the assumption of a natural impossibility, as relating to man in the case of duty. Because the subject is admitted to be a free agent, and free agency is known and defined, and by the Confession itself is admitted to be the capacity of choice, with power of contrary choice. A free agent to whom spiritual obedience is a natural impossibility, is a contradiction. By the laws of exposition, I am entitled to all the collateral evidence which can be thrown upon the meaning of the Confession from the several sources of expository knowledge already enumerated, and which I will not here recapitulate. Dr. Wilson insists that man is able to do nothing: but NOTHING is a slender foundation on which to rest the justice of the Eternal Throne, in condemning men to everlasting punishment, and feeble indeed would be God's gripe upon the conscience. But it will be easy to show that the strongest passages relied on to prove natural inability are forbidden to be interpreted in that sense by the established laws of exposition. For example, it is said, John 6: 44: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The nature of the inability here declared is indicated by the kind of drawing which is to overcome it. This is taught in the verse immediately following, and elsewhere in the Bible. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God: every man, therefore, that hath *heard* and hath *learned* of the Father cometh unto me." The drawing of the Father, then, without which no man can come, ording to prophetic exposition, quoted and sanctioned by Redeemer, is in being "taught of God," in *hearing* and

of the Father; and this is precisely the doctrine of
ssion. "God maketh the reading, but especially
ing of his Word, an effectual means of convincing
rting sinners." "I drew them with cords of a man,
s of love." This is the drawing; with the bands of
t by the attraction of gravity. Suppose the planets
p in their course, would God, do you think, attempt
ne the *vis inertiæ* of matter by the "reading and
the preaching of his Word"? Would he send the
ndments to start them? or would he draw "them
of a man, and with bands of love," to move onward
its? Yet the Confession, and the Catechism, and
all as certainly teach that the impediment to be
is overcome by moral means: by the truth, by the
od, by the reading and especially the preaching of
made effectual by the Holy Spirit. It cannot,
be any natural inability; any such inability as
lieving a natural impossibility, which is removed in
n. But it is said "the carnal mind is enmity
d," and that this is an involuntary condition of
it is it a natural impossibility for any enemy to be
to him? The text does not say that fallen man
reconciled to God; but it says that the carnal mind
subject to the law: "It is not subject to the law
ther indeed can be." Carnality can never be so
to become obedience. Again, the "natural man
ot the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he
, because they are spiritually discerned." Does this
an unconverted man can have no just intellectual
of the Gospel, of truth and duty, in order to his
? How, then, can he be any more to blame than the
ho have never heard of Christ? And what better

condition are men in, with the Bible which they cannot understand, than the heathen are, with no Bible at all! But if by *receiving* and *knowing* be meant a willing reception and an experimental knowledge, which is a common use of the terms, then the text teaches simply that until the heart is changed there can be no experimental religion in the soul; that a holy heart is indispensable, not to intellectual perception, but to spiritual discernment, to Christian experience.

5. The Bible not only does not teach the natural inability of man to obey the Gospel, but it teaches directly the contrary. The moral law itself bounds the requisition of love by the strength of the subject. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God — with what? — with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; — and with what else? — with all thy STRENGTH. But, if heart and soul and mind and strength constitute no strength, how is he bound by such a command as this? In the same manner, constitutional powers, bearing such a relation to obedience as constitutes obligation, are recognized in the Bible. See Isaiah 5: 1, 2, 3, 4. Was there nothing in the soil and culture of this vineyard which rendered fruit, in respect to the soil, a natural possibility? But the vineyard was the house of Israel, the owner was God, and the fruit demanded was evangelical obedience; and God, the owner, decided that what he had done rendered obedience practicable and punishment just. He calls upon the common sense and common justice of the universe to judge between him and his vineyard. He asks whether he had not done that for his vineyard which laid a just foundation for it to bring forth good instead of wild grapes, and declares that the bringing forth wild grapes was a thing enormous, and goes on to pronounce judgment upon his vineyard.

So in the parable of the talents. The owner committed a

ɔrtion of his money to every man, according to his
bility. These servants, again, represent the Jewish
The talents represent Gospel privileges; the im-
.t to be made believing, and the misimprovement
unbelief. The trust was graduated in proportion to
y of each man. There was ability, therefore, and
nt who improved his trust received a reward. But
nt who made excuses pleaded his natural inability,—
that thou wert a hard master, reaping where thou
sown, and gathering where thou hadst not strewed
an the task-masters of Egypt], and I was afraid. I
t undertake to do anything with my talent. I
would be safest to hide it, and run no risk." But
aid to him, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou
hat I was a tyrant, demanding the improvement of
estowed. How couldst thou suppose, then, that I
exact the improvement of what was given? Why
ı not put my money to the exchangers? and
ıould have received my own with usury. Do I
fects without causes? Take him away; thrust him
darkness; he has libelled his Maker, he has slan-
God."

broad principle is laid down in the Bible that abil-
ground and measure of obligation. According to
ı a man hath, and not according to that which he
to whom much is given, of him shall much be re-
t to whom little is given, of him shall little be
—is the language of the equitable Ruler of the
ut, if ability is not needful to obligation, why ob-
rule? — why not reverse it? Why not require
im to whom much is given, and much from him to
e is given? Present this principle to any man br

an idiot, and see what he will say to such a proceeding. There is not a human being whose sense of justice would not revolt from it. And shall man be more just than God? Nor is the principle of graduating responsibility by ability a limited rule of the divine government, applicable only in particular cases; the rule is general, it is universal, it applies to every free agent in the universe.

7. The implications in the Bible of man's ability, as a free agent, to render to God spiritual obedience, are many and irresistible.

Deut. 30: 15, 19. — See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God. Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.

Ps. 81: 10, 11, 12, 13. — Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts. O, that my people had hearkened unto me!

Ezekiel 18: 2. — They said, God punishes us for the sins of our fathers. But God replied (verses 20, 30, 31, 32), The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. Repent, and turn from all your transgressions and make you a new heart; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye.

Luke 13: 34. — O, Jerusalem, &c. &c., how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

Prov. 1: 24, 25, 29. — Because I have called and ye refused, &c. &c., therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

These, and innumerable such implications, indicate God's moral government of mercy over a world of rebel free agents, including precepts and prohibitions, and rewards and punishments, and exhortations and warnings, and entreaties, and even regrets, when incorrigible rebellion renders punishment just and indispensable.

ɜ, then, all those thus addressed had replied: "We glad, O Lord, to love and obey Thee, if we could; ɔnowest we have lost all power and ability, of every ›ve and obey." Would the Searcher of hearts have ɜm, "I know that you can do nothing of that kind ; but you can pray to me to help you, and you can Bible and attend public worship, and commit the , and lead a moral life; for as I live, saith the Lord, pleasure in your inability; therefore repent, and all your transgressions, and make you a new heart, ill ye die, O house of Israel"?

›s God call men to turn, when a natural impossibil- the way? Would he say to them, "See, I have thee this day life and good, and death and evil, in ɪmand thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to is ways, and to keep his commandments, and his ɔd his judgments, that thou mayest live and multi- ll heaven and earth to record this day against you, ɜ set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; ɔhoose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou ›y his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him." said that men are free to evil and accountable for g, I answer, if God commanded men to sin, that ɔe; but, if he commands them to stop sinning, and ɔo free agency to do it, and it is a natural impossi- op, how does free agency to do what is forbidden ɡation to abstain and do what is commanded, when ɔo power? Besides, could they sin without ability Iow, then, can they obey without ability to obey? y have free agency to obey, that is just what I am *for.* For they can no more obey without natural

power than they can sin without natural power. If man as a free agent has not natural power to obey, then commands, and exhortations, and entreaties, and expostulations, might as well be addressed to men without the five senses, commanding them, on pain of eternal death, to see, hear, feel, taste and smell. This argument was used by Pelagius and Arminius, and, in the forms they urged it, was easily answered; they brought it forward to prove not only that man is naturally able to obey God, but to prove that he actually does obey the Gospel without special grace,— that his will is under no bias from the fall, and that his moral ability is so unperverted that it is sufficient, without regeneration, to do all that God has commanded. Augustine maintained that the will was entirely struck out of balance; Pelagius, on the contrary, maintained that it remained in delightful equilibrium, and, consequently, that no grace of God was needed to determine it to a right choice, insisting that dependence on grace to change the will was inconsistent with commands and exhortations, &c. But Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and all the Reformers, fully admit the ability of man as a free agent, and deny that his moral inability and dependency as a sinner supersede obligation, invitation, and command. The natural ability of man is a point which has never been controverted by the Church at large, and generally only by heretics. The orthodox portion of the Church of God never has questioned it, and has denied only moral ability, that is, a right disposition or will, in opposition to the Arminian and Pelagian heresies.

The Scriptures and our Confession both teach, that God is not the author of sin,— that he neither creates it, nor devises plans nor adapts means to break the force of his own laws and administration, so as purposely to prevent obedience

ce sin, as the natural and necessary result of his
ɔr and agency. You may search the word and
ɔod with a microscope, and you cannot find any
ɔ as a plan tending to prevent obedience and to
in. You may light up ten thousand suns, and
ry cavern and deep recess of nature, and you can
ch thing. In the development of his character,
l and providence, he has produced powerful means
ɔ his subjects to obedience, unobstructed by any
ng influences designed to prevent obedience and
n. He has given no law against the moral law,
no motive to disobedience, and administers no
to defeat the administration which corroborates the
aw. All the tendencies of his government, law,
providential administration, are self-consistent
ɔn. God tempteth not any man, neither can he
of evil. The whole tendency of his government,
s of the Mediator, is to lead the ruined rebel to
is sins by repentance, and not to induce him to
hem. God is not the author of sin. It wars
whole moral influence of his glorious character,
and government. Nor in its existence in fallen
lence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is
r contingency of second causes taken away, but
ished."

, I reject all theories of the origin or continuance
h make God the author of sin. — The Gnostic,
ɔd man in contact with sinful matter, to be una-
rupted; or the Manichean, that it is a part of the
tance of the soul; or that it is a created instinct
ɔ, perverting the will by the power of a constitu-
ity; or that all agency in creatures is impossible,

and, therefore, that God creates sinful and holy exercises by a direct efficiency, in such quantities and proportions as pleases him. I hold, with the Confession, the doctrine of free agency, before and since the fall, sufficient, while upheld, to make holiness obligatory, and account for sin without supposing God to be its author, in a way which would make him contradict himself, and oppose his own laws and government, and do violence to the will of the creatures, and destroy the liberty of choice, determining it to evil by an absolute necessity of nature. To the system of free agency, then, which teaches that to fallen man "no ability of any kind" exists to obey the Gospel, or is required to constitute a perfect obligation to do so, and a just desert of eternal punishment for not obeying, I oppose the testimony of the whole Orthodox Church, and that of the Bible.

Finally. The Confession of Faith teaches plainly and unanswerably the free agency and natural ability of man, as capable of choice, with the power of contrary election.

In confirmation of this position, I refer to the Confession, chap. IX. sec. 1.

God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil.

Now, if this declaration has respect to man, as a *race*,—if the term man, as here employed, is generic, including Adam and all his posterity,—then the passage quoted settles the question. The whole turns on what is the meaning of the word *man*. Because, if it means man as *fallen*, if it means Adam's posterity, my opponent is gone,—the ground is swept from under him. He must prove that man means *Adam*, and Adam only, and Adam before the fall, or else the

Confession is against him. Now, what is the subject of the chapter to which this section belongs? It respects free will, — that is, free will in the theological sense of that phrase, as the doctrine was discussed between Augustine and Pelagius, a considerable time since the fall,— and has respect to man in the generic sense. That this is so is plain, from the scriptural references quoted in support of the positions taken. If the declarations of the chapter had respect solely to Adam, the scriptural references would be to Adam; but these references do not refer to him, but do refer to his fallen posterity. They drive the nail and clinch it. See what they are:

> But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. — James 1 : 14.
>
> I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.— Deut. 30 : 19.

These are the scriptural proofs selected and adduced by the Assembly of Divines, as exhibiting the Scripture authority on which the declarations in the chapter are made; and what are they? Listen to them:

> God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil. — Confess. of Faith, IX. 1.

If this means Adam, all I say is, that they use very bad grammar, and have made a most wonderful mistake in the references quoted. To say that the will of Adam before the fall is neither forced nor determined by necessity, is nonsense, and makes the second section tautology.

The first, if it refers to Adam in innocency, says he had natural liberty of will, and was not forced or determined by necessity to choose good or evil; and the second section repeats the same thing,—that man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to do good or evil.

I take the question as settled, then, that "man" here means man as a *race*, and that "will" here means the will of man as a race; and it is what I hold, and what all the Church hold; and it is the fair meaning of the Confession. What follows in the next section, with respect to man in a state of innocency, is a confirmation and an illustration of the doctrine as thus explained.

Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it (Confess. of Faith, IX. 2). That is, his free agency included the natural power of choosing right or of choosing wrong.

Adam had the natural ability to stand; and he had it in a state of balanced power, in which he was capable of choosing right and able to choose wrong.

Then comes section the third, which contains a description of the change induced by the fall; a change which respected the will of man, not his constitutional powers, but their voluntary exercise.

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost—

Lost!—what? His natural ability to choose right, so that he is now forced and determined by an absolute necessity to do good or evil? Not a word of it. It was not that; it was nothing else he lost; and thereupon turns the question between us. The Confession proceeds:

all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salva-

tion; so, as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

He lost "all ability of will." Does this mean that, in respect to the power of choice, he fell into a state of natural inability? Not at all. He had the power of choice as much as ever. But he had lost all moral ability, that is, all inclination to choose what was good. His will was altogether averse from it. He was altogether unwilling. He fell into an inability of will; that is, into a state of obstinate unwillingness. This is the common use of terms until this day. Moral inability means not impossibility, but it means unwillingness. Man became "dead." But how? Not by the annihilation of his natural powers, not dead in respect to the natural liberty of his will, but dead in sin; so as not to be able, by his own strength (of will), to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto. I say "Amen!" this is my doctrine. The word "able," and the word "strength," are both employed in a moral sense, and in a moral sense only; and, thus interpreted, the Confession is perfectly consistent with itself.

The fourth section of this chapter is a corroboration of the same position:

When God converts the sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

Frees him from what? From his free agency? from the constitutional powers of his being? No. Frees him from his bondage under sin; that is, from his bias to evil, from his

pressed this book to my heart, because it assures me that the righteous Governor of the world has done no violence to those powers and faculties of man which are essential to his moral government.

But I am happy, on this subject, in being able to adduce an authority altogether above my own. What did the Assembly of Divines mean by this word *contingency?* The celebrated Dr. Twiss, who was their prolocutor or moderator, must be high authority on that question. He says:

> Whereas we see some things come to pass necessarily, some contingently, so God hath ordained *that all things shall come to pass;* but necessary things necessarily, and contingent things contingently, that is, avoidably and with a possibility of not coming to pass. For every university scholar knows this to be the notion of contingency. — *Chr. Spec.*, vol. VII. No. 1, p. 165.

Dr. Twiss is speaking of natural and moral events,— the only events which exist in the universe; and he says that God decreed that all things should come to pass; that natural events should come to pass necessarily; and that moral events, which are acts of will, and which he calls "contingent things," shall come to pass contingently; which he explains to mean avoidably, and with a natural possibility of not coming to pass. He is speaking of the moral world, and he says that in the natural world all is necessary as opposed to choice, but that in the moral world all is free as opposed to coërcion, or natural necessity, or inability of choice; and that every act of will, though certain in respect to the decree, is yet free and uncoërced in respect to the manner of its coming pass, and as to any natural necessity, always avoidable,— avoided,— but, according to the very nature of free

agency, always avoidable, in accordance with the language of the Confession, ch. IX. sec. 1 [quoted above].

Now we shall show how God executes his decrees; and what says the Confession on this point? (See ch. V. sec. 2.)

Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly [that is, with entire certainty], yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely or contingently [that is, the volitions of the mind come to pass freely, and, as opposed to any natural necessity, avoidably].

The account given of the actual effects of the fall is a still further confirmation of our exposition. — Ch. VI. sec. 2.

By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

Also Shorter Catechism, Ques. and Ans. 17, 18:

Q. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery.

Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

If Dr. Wilson's position is true, and man lost the natural power of right choice, this answer should have been changed, and we should have been told that the fall brought mankind into a state of natural impotency. But it says no such thing. It says it brought him into a state of sin. What! Can a man sin without being a free agent? The effects here

stated are the loss of holiness and the corruption of his nature. But surely the corruption of nature is not the annihilation of nature; his nature must still exist, in order to be corrupt. What, then, is its corruption? It is death in sin; not the death of its natural powers. There is no destruction of the agent. But there is a perversion of those powers which do constitute his agency. So much for the testimony of the Confession of Faith.

I said that in expounding a written instrument we are always to consider the attributes of the subject concerning which it speaks: that its language is to be expounded in reference to the nature of the thing. The Confession teaches that man was endowed with a natural liberty of choice, and has suffered no perversion but that which consists in obstinate choice. His natural liberty remains, but in regard to moral liberty — that is, an unbiased will — the balance is wrong.

Such are my views of the natural ability of fallen man, and my evidence that they are just.

It is the ability of an intelligent, accountable agent for the exercise of his own powers under law, and in the view of motives, and with a sense of obligation, and just liability to reward and punishment. Nothing short of this distinguishes man from animals, or dust and ashes. If some such power be not real, no difference can be pointed out between free agency and fatality, and no reason assigned why God should govern man by moral laws, and hold him accountable, rather than any other of the products of his power and natural government. I say, therefore, with Tertullian,

"A law would not have been imposed on a person who had not in his power the obedience due to the law; nor again would transgression have been threatened with death, if the contempt also of the law were not placed to account of man's free will.

ıould be found to be good or bad by necessity, and not volun-
not with justice receive the retribution either of good or evil.

proceed to explain the doctrine of Man's Moral
as understood in every age by the Orthodox Church,
ght in the Confession of Faith and the Bible, and
ınd teach it.

ware that the doctrine of a moral inability, as dis-
from natural impossibility, is regarded by some as
f the imagination, or a mere metaphysical subtilty,
tical utility; while all its tendencies are powerfully
e territories of dangerous error. But when the
evidence of moral inability shall have been stated,
ear, as I hope, to such persons, that they have not,
ls says, "well considered the matter;" and that
listinction between natural impossibility and a moral
alpable and salutary, without denying the depend-
n for effectual calling on the special influence of
Ghost, or implying the doctrine of self-regeneration
on without an atonement by the deeds of the

ral inability I understand the fact that an agent,
er so willing, cannot do his duty, from defect of
ınd by moral inability, the fact that his capacity as
enders possible and makes obligatory the perform-
y, so that it is prevented only by an existing con-
e, an obstinate refusal, including in the term not
consecutive volitions, but that general and abiding
the mind for God or against him — which consti-
or unholy character, and includes what Edwards
s "the will and affections of the soul," and Tur-
ıbit of corrupt will."

This voluntary hindrance of spiritual obedience is called inability, in accordance, as I shall show, with the uniform use of speech in all the languages of men, applying the terms *cannot*, *unable*, &c., to one who is prevented from doing his duty by the slightest disinclination, up to the most terrible obstinacy of will. In reference to spiritual obedience, it is called inability, also, I have no doubt, from the great and universal difficulty experienced by man in changing from a wrong to a right decision of mind in respect to God and duty, as well as from the absolute certainty that without the Holy Ghost the obstinacy of the human will will produce its deadly results with a certainty equal to the connection between natural causes and their effect, though not in the same manner, or with the same results as to accountability and desert of punishment. It is called in the Creeds of the Reformation, and in our own Confession, inability of will, because spiritual obedience is prevented only by the perverse action of the will; and to indicate that free agency and natural ability never avail in fallen man to overcome the bias of his will to evil, under the combined influence of original and actual sin; that with the ability to choose right, resulting from free agency and creating obligation, he actually chooses wrong, and only wrong, until renewed by the Holy Ghost.

It is called a moral inability also in the language of Turretin.

1. Objectively, because it has respect to moral duties. 2. As to its origin, because it is brought on one's self; which arises from voluntary corruption, voluntarily acquired by the sin of man. 3. As to its character (*formaliter*), because that is voluntary and culpable which is founded in a habit of corrupt will.

By all this I understand Turretin to mean, that the moral inability of man is a reality, is distinct from a natural im-

', and is called moral because it respects the aver-
ind to the performance of spiritual duties, brought
race by the voluntary transgression of Adam, and
ıg in a habit of corrupt will. To all of which I

this sense that the term moral inability is used by

id to be naturally unable to do a thing which we cannot do if
ause what is commonly called nature does not allow of it.
bility is the want of inclination ; or, a contrary inclination.

potency of will to good, according to the Bible and
ssion, and the received doctrines of the Church,
ıe constitutional bias to actual sin produced in all
ıe fall, anterior to intelligent, voluntary action,
ıgh it destroys not that natural liberty with which
endowed the will, nor forces nor determines it by
ty of nature to the choice of evil instead of good,
theless, evince that mankind are, as Edwards says,
e influence of a prevailing, effectual tendency to
d wickedness which imply their utter and eternal

ias is added, in fallen adult man, that terrific deci-
nind in favor of the world and against God, which
es but under the special influence of the Spirit in
l calling.

may be added the formidable, accumulating in-
ıabit, which, though it forces not the will, or de-
perverse obstinacy by any necessity of nature,
n accordance with the known laws of perverted
fully corroborate the perverting influences of both
actual sin, by impairing the moral sensibilities of

the soul, and the power of motive to good, while it fearfully augments the temptations to evil, and facilitates the liability, and diminishes the resistance to a compliance.

This is the view of the subject which is recognized in our Confession, and taught in the Bible, and held forth in the creeds and standard orthodox works of every age as the received doctrine of the Church.

In my preaching, I have not been accustomed to employ the terms natural and moral inability, because they are the technical terms of theological controversy, around which prejudice has gathered odium and mistake. But in the present case I have no other alternative, because it is on these technical terms that the whole controversy turns.

I say, then, that our Confession, while it teaches unanswerably the free agency and natural ability of man to choose right as well as wrong, teaches with equal clearness his moral inability as consisting in a settled aversion of will to all spiritual obedience, until called efficaciously by the Word and Spirit of God.

1. There is no necessity for interpreting the terms of the Confession, as applied to fallen man, to mean the natural impossibility of obedience.

The various phrases expressing inability are by common use in all languages applied to express whatever is prevented voluntarily, either by slight disinclination, or the most powerful, immutable decision of the mind. We use the terms *cannot*, *unable*, &c., continually to express whatever for the slightest reasons we do not find it convenient or feel inclined to do, and where no natural impossibility exists, or is thought of. As there is, therefore, no necessity to interpret the terms *inability* and *unable*, when applied to fallen man, as teaching natural impossibility of obedience, so also, from the which

lished use of the terms in all languages, there is no authority for doing it.

The decision and permanence of sinful preference affords no evidence of its natural and unavoidable necessity.

Edwards has shown that certainty and uniformity of right or wrong action does not decide the manner of it, as being voluntary or coërced.

He shows, in accordance with our Confession, that God is free in his decrees and their execution, as opposed to the coërcion of fate; and that Christ, though his character and life were foretold and certain, and he went as it was written of him, acted nevertheless with entire and uncoërced voluntariness. The same principle holds good in the case of Nebuchadnezzar and Judas, and sinners given up of God. Though their conduct may be certain as a matter of fact, it is not certain by a coërced necessity, but is in the highest sense *free* and accountable; and such throughout are the implications of the Confession and the Bible. Because the moral inability of man, therefore, is as immutable to all motive and human effort as the effects of natural causes, it does not follow that it is made certain and immutable by a natural necessity.

The doctrine of the moral impotency of man is not inconsistent with any of the other doctrines of the Bible.

It is not inconsistent with the doctrine of our entire and absolute dependence for regeneration on the special influence of the Holy Spirit; for, while it includes a natural ability of obedience, as the ground of obligation, it teaches the certainty of its obstinate perversion, creating, in point of fact, a necessity of the Holy Ghost to renew as real and as great as if the impediment were a natural impossibility. It no more implies self-regeneration, than if the work of the Spirit, in subduing the will, consisted in creating new faculties; the influence of

the Spirit to make man willing being just as indispensable to his salvation, as if it were indispensable to make him naturally able. Nor does that ability to obey, whose exercise is prevented by choice, imply that it is an easy matter for man to repent and turn to God, in and of himself; for everything which is possible as a matter of duty is not therefore easy. I agree therefore with Turretin, "that man, laboring under such an inability, is falsely said to be able, if he wishes,"—implying that a sinner's wishes may change a heart fully set on evil. "For though the phrase may to some extent be tolerated, understood concerning the natural power of willing, which, in whatever condition we may be, is never taken away from us, yet it cannot be admitted when we speak of the moral disposition of the will to good, not only to willing, but to willing rightly." For, though in respect to the possibility and corresponding obligation there can be no excuse, nevertheless, in respect to the difficulty, nothing which the mind can lawfully be commanded to do can be more difficult. It is difficult to resist the original bias of the mind to actual sin; difficult to relinquish the chief good located on earth, and set our affections on things above; and difficult to reverse the long-accumulating tendency of the habitual indulgence of our evil way. The Bible, therefore, represents it as, though a reasonable, yet a difficult thing for a lost sinner to save himself; so difficult that none do it, and that God in doing it makes glorious displays both of power and grace, and every sinner and every saint, in working out his salvation, finds the scriptural representation true. The inattentive find it difficult to resolve upon immediate attention, and difficult to fix their attention when they have done it. The stupid find it difficult to awaken themselves to feel and realize anything: and the awakened find it difficult to see and feel their sins, and the great evil of

sin; and, when convinced of sin, difficult to repent and come to Christ. And when the sinner is converted, it is so difficult to maintain a spiritual frame and holy resolutions, and watchfulness and prayer and perseverance, that, for all that is past, and all that is to come, he says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

The terms of the Confession preclude the interpretation of a natural impossibility as their only meaning, and cannot be so interpreted without making the Confession contradict itself.

According to a well-established rule of interpretation, no instrument is to be so explained as to make it contradict itself without necessity, and when it is just as easy to harmonize all its parts by adopting a different interpretation. Now, if I have not proved that the Confession, as I interpret it, is sustained by other collateral arguments, in addition to that which I have drawn from the Bible, then I shall despair of ever successfully expounding a document in the world. I never have seen so much light thrown on any one point of exposition before. Does not the Confession speak of an inability other than a natural one? Does it not teach expressly "the natural liberty of the will" in fallen man to choose good or evil, uncoërced by fate or necessity? And, after all, is it a natural liberty that means nothing, and can do nothing? Does "inability of will" mean a natural impossibility of exercising that "natural liberty of the will" in the choice of good; and that it is coërced by a natural necessity to the preference of evil? Does the Confession contradict itself? We are not at liberty, then, to make it in one set of terms deny an ability which it has asserted in another. And when it declares in appropriate phraseology the natural liberty of the will, it cannot mean to contradict, in its account of moral impotency, what it had before asserted with respect to its abil-

ity to choose, as opposed to fate. I may be able in one sense, and unable in another. The Confession, in fact, interprets itself. (And this, I suppose, is what Dr. Wilson means when he says we must receive the language of the Confession without any explanation.) I agree with him, that on many points it needs no explanation. It guards against its own perversion, and its language is such as I should think it almost impossible to misunderstand.

Let us see what is the language which it holds in chap. VI. sec. 4:

> From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

Here is active aversion, not fatal necessity. The man is indisposed; he is disabled by being indisposed. But it has been said that if a man needs help it must be a natural inability under which he lies. This I deny. A man who lies under a moral inability needs aid as really as if he were naturally unable; and the aid he needs is such as God alone can bring him. What Christian does not pray that God would help him? But does he mean that he has no strength of any sort? Not at all. He is afraid to trust his own heart. He prays for moral aid, for moral ability, for strength of purpose. Surely, we are all agreed in this. We believe alike, for we pray alike. New School and Old School all confess, when they get before God, their impotency of will to good, and pray for help to will and to do. I have put off my coat,—how shall I put it on? We feel this impotency; and what we feel God sees; and that which he sees he has *testified.*

Chapter IX. on Free Will:

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

When it says that man has lost all ability of will, it does not mean that he has lost all free agency. It does not mean, that he is not able as a free agent, and bound to do that which is right, but that he has lost all *will* to do it. My soul! do I not believe this? Did I not feel it when God convinced me of sin? Full well did I feel it. Did I not fall at the footstool and tell the Lord that I was gone, that I was ruined and helpless, and never should come back to him, unless he put forth his hand to deliver me? If I ever preached any truth to dying men with all my heart and with all my soul, it is the truth of man's total depravity and inability; that his condition is desperate, and never will he turn and live unless God shall look down from heaven and have mercy upon him. This is my doctrine; and it is the doctrine of the Confession, which says, we are *averse* from all good. This language suits me. There is no catch in this, no quibble; I mean what I say; I fully and heartily believe that man is utterly *averse* to all good; that he is dead; dead in law and dead in sin,—under the curse of God, and so will ever remain, until God quickens him by his Spirit and grace.

But let us see what the Confession says in sec. IV. chap. 9:

When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruption he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

"Enable" here does not imply that there is any natural *inability. It means,* inclines him to will. The Confession is

orthodox; it says that no mere man is able, without divine aid, to keep God's commandments. That is my faith. I admit, however, that this was the spot at which I once stumbled, when, as I said, I was unable fully to embrace the Confession of Faith. I saw a difficulty here. I believed the Confession to mean just as Dr. Wilson now insists that it does mean; and in that sense I never could receive it. But on reflection, and with those collateral lights which I have mentioned, I now understand it to speak the very truth, and I embrace it accordingly. I believe in the moral inability which it here declares; and I believe that moral inability to obey the law perfectly will continue until the Christian reaches his home in heaven.

But now let us hear what the Confession says upon effectual calling. I quote from chap. x. sec. 1!

All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call by his Word and Spirit out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

This enlightening I hold to be a divine illumination, and such as the Spirit of God alone can give. The phrase "heart of stone," which is employed in one of the texts cited as proof, is a metaphor; and so is the "heart of flesh;" and this, I believe, is the only passage in the whole Bible where the term "flesh" is employed to signify anything good. A *heart of flesh* manifestly means tenderness, susceptibility,—*in other* words, a willing heart. Renewing the "will," that

is, turning the will into a new direction. It is God who turns it. The sinner left to himself never will turn. But in conversion God does not make a free agent. He turns a free agent. I am perfectly aware that some very good men suppose and assert that the men of the new school (though that, by the by, is one of the most undefined of all designations; the term is like fog,—it has no substance and no definite limits, but floats about in a sort of palpable obscure) hold to self-regeneration, and that the influence of the Holy Spirit is not necessary in turning a sinner from darkness to light. No man ever heard me teach such a doctrine. I have taught directly the reverse, and have put the doctrine of man's absolute dependence into as strong terms as I knew how to employ. If there are any stronger, I shall be glad to get hold of them. All who are in the habit of hearing me know perfectly that the total depravity of man, and his dependence on the power and help of the Spirit of God, has been the great subject of all my preaching; and, as I well know, has been, under God, the power of my preaching. I think, and always have thought, that the display of divine Omnipotence in converting rebel minds is greater by far than any exhibition of it which ever has been made in the material world. And for an obvious reason,—because mind has more power of resistance than matter. Some men seem to think, that if God does a thing by instrumentality, no opportunity is left for God to show his own great power. I think far otherwise. To me the truth seems weak enough in itself to leave ample space for the display of Omnipotence in making it effectual. I think that the act of God in regeneration is the most stupendous manifestation of omnipotent energy that has ever been made by the Almighty. Nor do I ever expect to see anything in God's works that will rival the solemn majesty of that great-

est of all his operations, which, silent as the spheres, moves on in its resistless strength, making the hearts of rebels yield before it.

The next point in the confirmation of my exposition of the doctrine of the Confession, touching the moral impotency of man, is to show that what it affirms on that subject has been the doctrine of the Church of God in all ages. And I shall now attempt to show that the fathers, while they held free will, in opposition to necessity and blind fate, nevertheless taught the moral inability of man, and his dependence on the Holy Spirit, just as I teach it. The first authority I shall produce on this point is that of Clement of Alexandria:

Since some men are without faith, and others contentious, all do not obtain the perfection of good. Nor is it possible to obtain it without our own exertion. The whole, however, does not depend upon our own will; for instance, our future destiny; for we are *saved by grace*, — not, indeed, without good works. — *Scott's Tomline*, vol. II. p. 56.

Clement teaches, in this passage, man's natural ability and his moral inability, with equal clearness.

ORIGEN. — The virtue of a rational creature is mixed, arising from his own free will, and the divine power conspiring with him who chooses that which is good. But there is need of our own free will, and of divine coöperation, which does not depend upon our will, not only to become good and virtuous, but also after we become so, that we may persevere in virtue. — p. 82.

I quoted him before, and showed that he was strong on the doctrine of free will, as opposed to fate. What I have now quoted may be considered as a good commentary upon the text, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

GREGORY NAZIANZEN. — A right will stands in need of assistance from

ther the very desire of what is right is something divine, and the mercy of God. For we have need *both of power over our- of salvation from God.* Therefore, says he, it is not of him ı, — that is, not of him *only* that willeth, — nor only of him that at of God that showeth mercy. Since the will itself is from h reason attributes everything to God. However much you er much you contend, you stand in need of him who gives the

y says that God is the author of faith — that he is ning of good in the soul; yet he is equally explicit ctrine of free will as opposed to fatalism. He holds has need of all that free agency can do, and all that forms beside.

— For the freedom of the will is so to be reserved that the giver may excel in all things, according to the saying of the cept the Lord build the house, their labor is but lost that build the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It ı that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that show- — p. 146.

lares, then, that though man is a free agent, yet on is not the effect alone of his agency, but also of e grace; as the preservation of a city is not the the watchman's care alone, but of God's unsleeping . Unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman t in vain.

T. — Neither the grace of the Spirit is sufficient for those who *ingness;* nor, on the other hand, can willingness, without ollect the riches of virtue. — p. 290.

e see, that while the grace of the Spirit does not the necessity of earnest attention and striving on f man, yet that no strivings of man will ever issue *g result,* without Almighty grace. And grace is

not to be expected while a man wilfully indulges in sloth and sleep, and puts forth no effort for his own deliverance.

But, before adducing quotations further, I would remark:

1. That every one of these confessions recognizes the liberty of the will, as free from coërcion.

2. They all uniformly ascribe its perverse action to the effect of the fall, in *biasing*, yet not in coërcing, the will.

3. They all teach expressly that the bondage is the influence of this evil bias, and not a natural necessity of sinning; and, taken together, they make out a clear and consistent account of the natural ability of man as a free agent, and of his *moral inability as a sinner, by reason of the bias of his will, as occasioned by the fall.* If you shut your eyes and try their meaning only by your ear, you will hear it abundantly asserted that man hath no liberty at all to desire good, and can of himself do nothing; but if you compare their own language with itself, you will perceive that they insist on the natural liberty of the will, which means natural ability, and teach only the impotence which results from the will itself, as biased and perverted by the fall, and that the distinction of man's natural ability as a free agent, and his impotency through the perversity of his will, runs through all the creeds, and is as plainly recognized in them as it is in our own Confession. It is this habit of interpreting by sound which demands a running exposition, or I should need to say nothing in exposition of the quotations from the former of the creeds.

HARMONY OF THE PROTESTANT CONFESSIONS.

The doctrines of the early Reformers in Europe were misunderstood by the Catholics, against whom they contended, who maintained that they were all a set of schismatics; that they

were perpetually jangling among each other, so that no two of them could agree; and on this alleged fact they strengthened the great argument of their church as to the necessity of having some head on earth to the visible church, whose decisions might settle controversies, and give uniformity to the faith. To meet this argument and repel it, the Reformers got up this book, which is entitled "The Harmony of the Confessions," the design of which was to show, by collating the Confessions of different evangelical churches, that the representation of their enemies was false, and that in all fundamental points of faith they were fully agreed.

From this book I am about to show what the Protestant churches, just come out of the fiery furnace of papal persecution, held on the subject of the *moral inability of man.* I have already shown what was the opinion of the fathers. I shall now show that of the Reformers. And I begin with the Confession of Helvetia:

CONFESSION OF HELVETIA. — And we take sin to be that natural corruption of man, derived or spread from those our first parents unto us all, through which we, being *drowned in evil concupiscences, and clean turned away all from God, but prone to all evil, full of wickedness,* distrust, contempt, and hatred of God, can do no good to ourselves, — no, not so much as think of any. — p. 58.

Here we see that man's inability does not consist in any want of understanding or conscience, or any other attribute or power of a free agent, but that it is the effect of that which is moral and voluntary; that it arises from the evil concupiscence of a corrupt nature, the wilful unbelief of a wicked heart. Men cannot do what is good. Why? Because they have a moral inability to do it. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Again:

We are to consider what man was after his fall. His understanding, indeed, was not taken from him; neither was he deprived of will, and altogether changed into a stone or stock. Nevertheless, these things are so altered in man, that they are not *able* to do now that which they could do before his fall. For his understanding is darkened, and his will, which before was *free*, is now becoming a servile will: for it serveth sin, not *nilling*, but *willing;* for it is called *a will* and not a nilling. Therefore, as touching evil or sin, man does evil, *not compelled either by God or the devil, but of his own accord;* and in this respect he hath a most free will. — p. 60.

The fall is here said not to have deprived man of free agency, not to have turned him into a stock or a stone; but that his free agency, as it did not suffice to keep him from sinning, does not suffice to raise him from the ruins of the fall. Again, let us listen to the same Confession:

The regenerate, in the choice and working of that which is good, do not only work passively, but actively. For they are moved of God, that themselves may do that which they do. And Augustine doth truly allege that saying, that *God is said to be our helper. For no man can be helped, but he that doth somewhat.* The Manichees did bereave man of all action, and made him like a stone and a block. — p. 62.

Here we find that no man is helped by grace as a mere passive, impotent machine; that he acts in working out his salvation; and that God helps him as a free agent, and not as a mass of lead. A piece of lead cannot be helped to rise. It may be lifted; but it cannot be helped. And for the simple reason, that it hath no agency of its own to be helped.

THE FRENCH CONFESSION. — Also, though he be endued with will, whereby he is moved to this or that, yet insomuch as that is altogether *captivated under sin*, it hath no liberty at all to desire good, as of itself, but such as it hath received by grace and of the gift of God. We believe that all the offspring of Adam is infected with this contagion, which we call *original sin*, that is, a stain spreading itself by propagation, and not by imitation only, as the Pelagians taught, all whose errors we do detest. Neither do

we think it necessary to search how this sin may be derived from one unto another. For it is sufficient that those things which God gave unto Adam were not given to him alone, but to all his posterity; and therefore, we in his person being deprived of all those good gifts, are fallen into all this misery and curse. — pp. 68, 89.

This Confession begins with the natural liberty of will to choose this way or that, and asserts only its moral impotence, as swayed by this bias of our constitution as affected by the fall.

CONFESSION OF BELGIA. — Therefore whatever things are taught, as touching man's free will [that is, unbiased will], we do worthily reject them, seeing that man is the servant of sin, *neither can he do anything of himself, but as it is given him from heaven;* for who is so bold as to brag that he is able to perform whatever he listeth, when, as Christ himself saith, "*No man can come unto me except my Father which hath sent me do draw him*" ?

From the context of this verse, and the Catechism, it appears that this drawing is accomplished by divine teaching, the reading and preaching of the Word, made effectual by his Spirit.

THE AUGSBURGH CONFESSION. — And this corruption of man's nature comprehendeth both the defect of original justice, integrity or obedience, and also concupiscence. This defect is horrible blindness and disobedience, that is, to wit, to want that light and knowledge of God, which should have been in our nature, being perfect; and to want that uprightness, that is, that perpetual obedience, that true, pure, and chief love of God, and those other gifts of perfect nature. — p. 71.

We have seen that Luther, the author of this Confession, teaches the natural ability of man as a free agent,— that all actual sin is voluntary, and every term employed here implies a moral, not a natural defect, the want of holiness, and the power of evil desire.

All these witnesses of the truth hold to the freedom of the *will as opposed to* coërcion or necessity, but deny its right

inclination; and thus, while they justify God's requirement they throw the sinner at the feet of sovereign grace. There he lies dead, hopelessly dead,—not in body, not in natural power, but dead in sins, dead morally, dead in hatred to God, dead in unbelief, dead in wilful and obstinate disobedience. And this distinction, once rightly apprehended and firmly fixed in the mind, is equal to twenty thousand candles lighted up and carried through the Bible.

The demand, however, is often made, What difference does it make whether the inability of the sinner is natural or moral, since the certainty of his destruction without the Holy Ghost is just as great in one case as the other? and of what consequence is an ability never exerted, and a power that is never employed?

It might as well be said that muscular power unexerted is as if it were not; that intellect perverted is the same as idiocy, and conscience seared is the same as if none had been given; that bread rejected to starvation is the same as inevitable famine,—as to say, that the voluntary perversion of all the competent powers of free agency is the same thing as their non-existence.

Does it amount to the same thing, whether a man cannot be temperate, or can be and will not? cannot be honest, or can be and will not? A man as a free agent may, indeed, make his own destruction as certain as if he could not help it. But does it make no difference, as to his character and desert, whether he perishes from the natural impossibility of being saved, or from a voluntary obstinacy in rejecting salvation? And does it amount to the same thing, in respect to the character of God and the equity of his government, whether sinners fall under the operation of its penalties from a natural impossibility of laying hold on

the provision for escaping them by a timely repentance, or by a voluntary obstinacy in despising the riches of his goodness? Provided a man, as a matter of certainty, will die at a given time, does it amount to the same thing whether he was killed unavoidably or committed suicide? was thrust off a precipice against his will, or threw himself off? was poisoned unwittingly, or purposely poisoned himself? was assassinated by the dagger of another, or thrust a dagger into his own bosom?

The difference between ability and inability, in the subject, is the difference between the natural and moral government of God: in one of which his power and wisdom and goodness are displayed in the superintendence of animals and instincts,— in the other, in the administration of law, and the government of the immortal mind,— in which his justice, and the richness of his goodness, and the exceeding greatness of his mercy, are to shine forever. But does it make no difference whether his justice is illustrated in punishing the impotent, or the unwilling? and his mercy in forgiving the non-performance of impossibilities, or the wilful disobedience of reasonable requirements? It makes the difference between fatalism and free agency,— confounding the pretension of the atheist to a temporary animalism, and compelling him to tremble under the responsibilities of an everlasting accountability, guilt and punishment.

It stops the pestilent breath of sceptics and cavillers, by which thousands of youthful minds are perverted, reasoning minds perplexed, pious minds distressed, and dissolute minds comforted with the hope of impunity in sin, because God is just and sin is unavoidable.

It takes away one of the most prevalent temptations to the infidelity and atheism of the present day. In reading the

works of atheists and infidels, and in attending to the objections of perverted minds, the exciting and exasperating cause seems to be, the supposition of accountability, associated with a constitutional, involuntary, unavoidable impotency. It is the belief that the Bible and the Calvinistic Confessions attach accountability and punishment to a natural impotency which provokes and sustains three-fourths of the atheism and infidelity of our nation. They would admit the equity of a government requiring according to what a man hath, but are provoked and enraged at the supposed injustice of punishment unconnected with the possibility of obedience in the subject; and understanding and being assured by masters in Israel that the Bible and our Confession teach this, they turn and rend the Bible. The distinction between natural and moral ability counteracts the Antinomian perversions of the Calvinistic system. Through all periods of the Church since the Reformation, there have been Antinomian Calvinists, and eras of outbreaking Antinomian ultraism; and it has arisen from giving to the decrees of God and their execution the force of irresistible causes, and to man the action of a passive machine; and though in some it has stopped in the frozen regions of intellectual formality and presumptuous reliance on God's efficiency without human instrumentality, in the less intellectual and more heated and fanatical it has degenerated not unfrequently into the most reckless licentiousness. So the same opinions operated among the Jews, as we learn by the terrible interrogations of the prophet,—"Will ye lie, and steal, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and come into this house which is called by my name, and say we are delivered to do all these abominations? We have no power over ourselves. We do but *obey the irresistible* laws of our nature. We are delivered

by the constitution God has given us, to do
things." The only difference between these an
modern licentious Antinomians is, that the ancie
accountability entirely, while the latter attach it t
and bring in the grace of God to deliver from
impotency. All these obliquities of abused Calvi
been pushed out, as I believe, by the system of a
fatality of will to evil.

The one is the occasion of great perplexity and su
the pious, and not unfrequently to Christian ministe
submit to it as very right because God does it.
a dark and painful subject,— they are embarrassed
their preaching, and still more embarrassed in their
to meet and answer the objections it creates, and at
excruciated with its bearings on their common sense
ings.

These different theories manifest their different
preaching. The one tends to the earnest incul
immediate spiritual obedience, after the example of
apostles, and the whole Bible. The other, to the su
of unregenerate prayers and strivings, with pr
gracious aid; instead of commanding and entreatin
everywhere to repent and fly to the Saviour, by the
God abiding on them, and the terrors of the Lord
them.

The different effects of our Confession, when exp
teaching a real free agency or a real fatality, cann
cealed or denied. By very large portions of the c
the construction of natural inability in our Creed i
to teach fatality, associated with accountability,
our Church with the most rancorous hostility and
prejudice, and raising up between ourselves and ot

nations an impassable barrier, and giving them motive and opportunity to impede and annoy us. The most successful means employed against our Church, in many places, have been the printing and circulation of our Confession as a text-book for comment. They do, indeed, misunderstand and misinterpret its meaning; but perhaps honestly, inasmuch as they are sustained by the exposition of some of the ministers of our own Church,—and should the highest judicature of our Church pronounce the exposition correct, it would no doubt greatly facilitate their labor.

In addition to the Christian fathers and the Protestant Confessions, on the subject of moral inability, I refer to every one of the authorities I have quoted,—to Luther, Calvin, Turretin, Witherspoon, Edwards, Bellamy, Hopkins, Dwight, Spring (father and son), Wilson of Philadelphia, Woods, Tyler and Dr. Matthews,— as teaching the moral inability of man as consisting in an uncoërced voluntary aversion to spiritual obedience, not merely in consecutive volition, but in a permanent character, which is voluntary and culpable, because, as Turretin says, "founded in a habit of corrupt will." I close the quotations with Dr. Greene's account of moral inability. He says:

I conclude the present lecture with a quotation from Dr. Witherspoon, in which my own views of the topic before us are correctly expressed,—"As to the inability of man to recover himself by his own power, though I would never attempt to establish a metaphysical system of NECESSITY, of which infidels avail themselves in opposition to all religion, nor presume to explain the influence of the Creator on the creature, yet nothing is more plain from Scripture, or better supported by daily experience, than that man by nature is, in fact, incapable of recovery, without the power of God specially interposed. I will not call it a necessity arising from the irresistible laws of nature. I see it is not a necessity of the same kind as constraint; but I see it an impossibility such as the sinner never does overcome."—*Christ. Advocate*, 1831; p. 349.

If there be any doubt of Dr. Witherspoon's and Dr. Greene's meaning, the following exposition of Witherspoon himself may throw some light on the subject.

In this passage Witherspoon, speaking the approved sentiments of Dr. Greene, disclaims the infidel system of natural necessity, asserts an incapacity in man to recover himself to holiness without the power of God,— not, however, arising from the irresistible laws of nature, not a necessity of the same kind as constraint, but such an impossibility as the sinner never does overcome. This is correct, and is a good statement of natural ability and moral inability.

Since mention has been made of perfect conformity to the will of God, or perfect obedience to his law, as the duty of man, which is indeed the foundation of this whole doctrine, I think it necessary to observe, that some deny this to be properly required of man, as his duty in the present fallen state, because he is not able to perform it. But such do not seem to attend either to the meaning of perfect obedience or to the nature or cause of this inability. Perfect obedience is obedience by any creature to the utmost extent of his natural powers. Even in a state of innocence, the holy dispositions of Adam would not have been equal in strength and activity to those of creatures of a higher rank ; but surely to love God, who is infinitely amiable, with all the heart, and above all to consecrate all his powers and faculties, without exception and without intermission, to God's service, must be undeniably the duty of every intelligent creature. And what sort of inability are we under to pay this ? Our natural faculties are surely as fit for the service of God as for any baser purpose ; THE INABILITY IS ONLY MORAL, AND LIES WHOLLY IN THE AVERSION OF OUR HEARTS FROM SUCH EMPLOYMENT. Does this, then, take away the guilt ? Must God relax his law because we are not willing to obey it ? Consult even modern philosophers, and such of them as allow there is any such thing as vice will tell you that it lies in evil or misplaced affections. Will, then, that which is ill in itself excuse its fruits from any degree of guilt or blame ? The truth is, notwithstanding the loud charge of licentiousness upon the truth of the Gospel, there is no other system, that ever I perused, which preserves *the obligations of* the law of God in its strength ; the most part *of them, when thoroughly* examined, just amount to this, that men are

bound, and that it is RIGHT and MEET and FIT that they should be as good and as holy as they themselves incline. — *Witherspoon*, vol. I. p. 45.

This is all which any one, from Justin Martyr to this day, has taught, concerning man's natural ability, namely, that he is able to obey, in respect to any hindrance arising from the irresistible laws of nature, including necessity of sinning of the same kind as constraint. Yet nothing is better supported from Scripture than that man by nature is in fact incapable of recovery without the power of God specially interposed, though not "an impossibility such as the sinner cannot, but such as he never does overcome;" for, as Howe says, "notwithstanding the soul's capabilities, its moral incapacity — I mean its wicked aversation from God — is such as none but God himself can overcome." Now, if all these writers, including Dr. Greene, "disclaim," as he does, any metaphysical system of necessity of which infidels avail themselves in opposition to all religion,— any necessity of persisting in actual sin, arising from the irresistible laws of nature,— and only insist that by the fall such an *aversation* of man's will from God has been occasioned as constitutes such an impossibility as the sinner never does overcome, I think it must be admitted that the whole Orthodox Church have been and are singularly united in the doctrine of man's natural ability of uncoërced will, and in his moral impotency by reason of a biased and perverted will.

I subjoin a few examples of natural and moral inability, as the terms are familiarly employed in the Bible:

NATURAL INABILITY. — "Thou canst not see my face and live." Moses desired the full-orbed vision of the glory of God; but was answered that it would destroy his life,— his *natural* powers could not sustain the overpowering manifesta-

tion. David said of his child, after his death, "Can him back again?" and Solomon, "Can a man take fi bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" And God ("Can any hide himself that I shall not see him?" Chaldeans answered, There is not a man upon the ea can show the king's matter — tell his dream and its in tion." "They which would pass from hence to you neither can they pass to us that would come from These are evidently specimens of natural inability, willingness or effort on the part of the agent could su

Let us now look at the same terms as implying from disinclination or contrary choice,—"aversation

MORAL INABILITY. —"With God all things are p that is, his natural power is equal to any act which its own nature an impossibility. "God who cannot "by two immutable things in which it was impossible to lie." Is God's omnipotence so limited that for power he could not utter falsehood? Is it not the aversion of his holiness which constitutes the i "The strength of Israel *will not lie.* Your new m Sabbaths, and calling of assemblies, I CANNOT away is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." The *cann* plained to mean his aversion to hypocrisy in worshi fore it follows, "when ye make many prayers *I* hear."

It is said of our Saviour, that "he must needs go Samaria." Was he compelled to go through San did he simply, for sufficient reasons, choose to go tha

"He could not do mighty works there because of t belief." Did the unbelief of man overpower divine tence, so that Christ had no ability to work miracles *it furnish to his divine* wisdom such reasons against

him *prefer* not to do it, expressed by the phrase *could not*, that is, chose not to do it?

"Can the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?" Doubtless they possess the natural ability. But the meaning is, Will they choose to do it? Can they,—that is, will they?

"Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" It was the cup of suffering and of ignominy; and he meant not whether they could feel pain and persecution and shame (for he told them that they should), but whether they were willing, and believed that they should continue willing, to suffer with him. "Can ye," that is, are you and shall you be willing?

"If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Did our Saviour doubt whether God had the power to deliver him instantly from suffering? He knew he could do it; and only, as man, was not certain whether the agony he had already suffered might suffice, or the expiation demanded more. The phrase, if it be *possible*, means therefore if it be wise and seem good in thy sight,—if thou art satisfied and willing, let this cup pass, &c.; but if otherwise, not my *will*, but thy *will* be done. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" that is, thou canst do it, if thou art willing, implying, as in the case before, that he could not cleanse him if unwilling, calling unwillingness inability.

"This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" This means not that a sinner has no power to hear the humbling doctrine of total depravity; but who, as we say, can bear it,—that is, be willing, be pleased with it? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. It was those that could not hear such sayings.

"Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils." The natural ability of man qualifies him to sit at

either table; but, while he prefers the table of Christ, he cannot — will not — prefer the table of devils.

"The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." If this means a natural inability, how does regeneration help the matter, as it includes the creation of no new natural powers or faculties? But, if it means that the carnal mind is one which, by its friendship for the world, is at enmity with God, then it is plain that the mind which prefers the creature to God cannot at the same time prefer God to the creature, though the hindrance is not natural, but the inability of the will,— a moral inability,— a duty prevented by a contrary choice.

"And Joshua said, Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God." The people understood him to say that they had no moral ability,— no heart to serve him,— because they were so sinful. But they replied, "Nay, but we will serve the Lord,"— we have the ability because we have the will.

"How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God?" that is, how can you believe who prefer the praise of man more than the praise of God,— who voluntarily set at naught Jesus Christ?

"The natural man cannot know the things of the kingdom of God;" but why can he not,— what hinders?

Answer.—"If our Gospel be hid it is hid to them who are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the hearts of them that believe not." "No man can come unto me except the Father draw him," that is, by his hearing and being taught of God; making the reading, and especially the preaching of his Word, the means of his effectual calling by his Spirit.

These examples, to which thousands might be added, decide *that the Scriptures* of the Old and New Testament, given by

inspiration of God, do maintain the distinction between things whose existence is perverted for want of sufficient capacity in the agent, and things which lie within the limits of his capacity and are only prevented by his choice,—and that both are expressed by the terms *cannot*, *impossible*, *unable*, &c.,—leaving it to the nature and connections of the subject to indicate the peculiar meaning, and never, except in theological controversy, or the cavillings of sinners, leading to any mistake.

I have said that this use of the terms *cannot*, *unable*, &c., to indicate those things which men are able to perform, but do not choose to do, is not a phraseology peculiar to the Bible, but is a mode of speaking into which the universal mind of man, in all nations, ages and languages, has fallen, from the familiarity of the conversational and business dialect, up to the most labored efforts of argument and eloquence.

I ask my neighbor who is on a sick bed, Are you able to walk? and he replies, I am not. When restored to health, I inquire of him, Can you assist me in my business to-day? and he replies, I cannot. I should be glad to oblige you, but my own business compels me to go another way. How often, when a man is provoked at the conduct of his neighbor, do we hear the indignant exclamation,—"It is too bad,—I cannot bear it!" And how common is it to say of a man, strongly prejudiced by interest or passion, he cannot hear, cannot see, cannot understand; and of the miser when the cry of the widow and fatherless assails him, he cannot give. Gold is his god, and his heart is made of stone.

The following examples from Edwards, and Buck, and a ther writers of eminence, will suffice both to illustrate e of the distinction between natural and moral ina-

bility, and the *usus loquendi* of theological, political and literary authors:

EDWARDS. — To give some instances of this moral inability: A woman of great honor and chastity may have a moral inability to prostitute herself to her slave. A child of great love and duty may be unable to be willing to kill his father. A drunkard, under such and such circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking of strong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to desire his prosperity; yea, some may be so under the power of a vile disposition that they may be unable to love those who are most worthy of their esteem and affection. A strong habit of virtue, and a great degree of holiness, may cause a moral inability to love wickedness in general, may render a man unable to take complacence in wicked persons or things, or to choose a wicked life, and prefer it to a virtuous life. And, on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedness may lay a man under an inability to love and choose holiness, and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy being, or to choose and cleave to him as his chief good.

BUCK.

Natural Inability.	*Moral Inability.*
Cain *could not* have killed Abel, if Cain had been the weakest, and Abel aware of him.	Cain *could not* have killed Abel, if Cain feared God, and loved his brother.
Jacob *could not* rejoice in Joseph's exaltation before he heard of it.	Potiphar's wife *could not* rejoice in it, if she continued under it.
The woman mentioned in 2d Kings 6 : 29 *could not* kill her neighbor's son and eat him, when he was hid, and she could not find him.	Had that woman been a very affectionate mother, she *could not* have killed her own son in a time of plenty, as she did in a time of famine.
Hazael *could not* have smothered Benhadad, if he had not been suffered to enter his chamber.	If a dutiful, affectionate son had been waiting on Benhadad, in Hazael's stead, he *could not* have smothered him, as Hazael did.

There is hardly an author of repute, from the time of Alfred to the present day, — whether a poet, a historian, an essayist, or a metaphysician, — who does not afford abundant

examples of such use of the word *cannot*. I select a few from known and classical authors:

LORD BACON. — A man's person hath many relations which he *cannot* put off. A man *cannot* speak to his wife but as a husband; to his son, but as a father; to his enemy, but upon terms. — p. 186.

Dr. JOHNSON. — In apologizing for the omission of many business terms in his Dictionary, he says:

I *could not* visit caverns to learn the miner's language, nor take a voyage to perfect my skill in the dialect of navigation, nor visit warehouses of merchants and shops of artificers, to gain the names of wares, tools, and operations, of which no mention is made in books.

Again, moral and natural inability are brought together in one sentence:

There never *can* be wanting some who will consider that a whole life *cannot* be spent on syntax and etymology, and that even a whole life *would not* be sufficient.

SHAKSPEARE, — who is as noted for using language as *men* in every situation use it, as he is for delineation of character:

Pray, can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as 't will,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. * * * *

But O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!
That *cannot* be; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder, —
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.

Hamlet, Act III. Scene 3.

BURKE. — I *cannot* remove the eternal barriers of creation.

This was a physical impossibility. But is the f occurring just before in the same speech, *physically* ble ?

I *cannot* insult and ridicule the feelings of millions of creatures, as Sir Edward Coke insulted one excellent indi Walter Raleigh) at the bar. — *Speech on Conciliation with Am*

WEBSTER. — This court, then, does not admit the doctrine th lature can repeal statutes creating private corporations. If repeal them altogether, of course it *cannot* repeal any part c impair them, or essentially alter them, without the consent of rators.

But if the court had chosen to be unjust, *could* do this ? Was it physically impossible ?

So, in the same speech, he says, in still stronger l "In the very nature of things, a charter *cannot* l upon anybody ; no one *can* be compelled to accept a

But is it literally *impossible* for one to be *comp suitable power ?*

So, a few lines after,— "It *cannot* be pretended legislature, as successor to the king in this part of rogative, has any power to revoke, vacate, or a charter." But if one *chose* to pretend this, could he *Webster's Speech in case Dartmouth College* v. *H. Woodward.*

ALEXANDER HAMILTON. — It *cannot* be affirmed that a durat years, or any other limited duration, would completely answ proposed. — *Federalist*, No. 61.

Surely he knew that it *could be* affirmed, if any c

JUDGE STORY. — Had the faculties of man been competent to t of a system of government which would leave nothing to imp *cannot be doubted that* the effort would have been made by th our constitution. — *Com. on Constitution* (abridged), p. 147

It certainly could not *reasonably*, but would it be out of the power of *mind* to do so?

But it is said, If men, as free agents, are in reality able to obey the Gospel, how does it happen that under such a pressure of motives no one of the human race should ever have done it? And suppose we could not tell, and should admit that it is wonderful,—as God does,—would it follow that the reason is the natural impossibility of evangelical obedience? How could it be wonderful that men do not of themselves obey the Gospel, if the reason of it is that it is a natural impossibility? Is it wonderful that men do not create worlds, or uphold or govern the universe? and why should the non-performance of one impossibility be more wonderful than another? Can there be no uniformity of character without a coërcive necessity producing it? Is not God of one mind, immutable, yet free? Are not the angels free who kept their first estate? And are not the fallen angels, though immutably wicked, as voluntary in their opposition to God as the holy angels are voluntary in their obedience? As to the uniform disobedience of fallen man until renewed by the Holy Ghost, we have only to say it is a matter of fact, well authenticated, that free agents do so; that it is a part of the terrific nature of sinful man to baffle all motives, and be voluntarily but unchangeably wicked, persevering in rebellion, amid commands, prohibitions, promises and threatenings, and the entreaties of the holy universe, and the weepings and wailings of the lost.

The next topic in order is that of ORIGINAL SIN. And, in my belief, there is no subject in theology on which it is more difficult to speak with clearness and accuracy than concerning the effects of the fall on the posterity of Adam, and the *condition* of the human mind before it arrives at the

point of developing its intellectual and moral powers in actual sin. Nor is it wonderful, because neither intuition nor philosophy, nor personal communion with infant mind, makes us acquainted with its attributes. For this reason, when I have spoken on the subject, I have confined myself uniformly to the facts in the case revealed in the Bible, and discarded pertinaciously all theorizing.

What the precise errors are which I am supposed to hold, I do not know; but, from the evidence relied on, and the general course of the argument, it would seem that I am supposed to hold the Pelagian doctrine on the subject; that I deny that Adam was the federal head and representative of his race; that the covenant was made not only with Adam, but also with his posterity; that the guilt of his sin was imputed to them; that there is any such thing as native depravity; or that infants are depraved. That, on the contrary, I hold and teach, that infants are innocent, and as pure as Adam before the fall; and that each one stands or falls for himself, as he rises to personal accountability; and that there is no such thing as original sin, descending from Adam by ordinary generation; and that original sin is not sin in any sense deserving of God's wrath and curse.

Now, every one of these assumed errors of my faith I deny to be my faith. They ascribe to me opinions which I have never held or taught; and, as I shall show, there is no evidence that I ever taught one of them.

There is no more evidence of my holding or teaching the doctrines of Pelagius on original sin, than there is of my holding the doctrine of Mahomet, or the Brahmins, or the Pope. And, though I doubt not that my direct evidence will be satisfactory, I will not omit that which is collateral and circumstantial. My religious education was superintended by

pious Calvinists of blessed memory; and was as orthodox as the Assembly's Catechism, committed to memory, could make it. My convictions of sin were in accordance with my educational belief, and were deep and distressing, to the cutting off of all self-righteous hope from native excellence, or acceptable obedience in any action, social, civil or religious, and laid me low in an agony of self-despair, at the footstool of mercy, as unholy, totally depraved, justly condemned, and hopeless of regeneration and pardon but through the infinite sovereign mercy of God, through the merits of Christ. And the change which led me to hope, and has sustained me in my ministry, and holds up my hopes of heaven, was, I full well know, "not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God;" so that, if I am a Pelagian now in my faith, few men can be more inexcusable in obliterating the teachings of a pious education, or the teachings of God's holy Spirit in my own distressing experience. But I have not gone back. I remember the horrid pit, and have also in fresh recollection the wormwood and the gall; and it is knowing the terrors of the Lord, and the love of Christ in my deliverance from them, which, if I am not deceived, have sustained and animated me in the work of the ministry. My theological education was under Dwight; and the authors which contributed to form and settle my faith were Edwards, Bellamy, Witherspoon, Dwight, and Fuller. With such favorite authors for my guide, I have perceived in myself no retrocession from my early convictions. The doctrines which have constituted the body and power of my preaching, so far as it has had any, have been,—the doctrine of God's decrees, the fall, the native and total depravity of man, election, actual calling, or regeneration by the special influence of Holy Spirit, justification by the merits of Christ through

faith, and the perseverance of the saints; doctrines n
monly, I believe, found in alliance with Pelagian no
native excellence and regeneration by moral suasion;
preaching, if Pelagians or Unitarians have claimed
never seemed to satisfy them, or the results of it t
spond with what they claimed to be the proper f
correct preaching; they have been the results of Ca
preaching, in convictions of sin and apparent conver
God, such as Pelagians ridicule and denounce as far
instead of the fruits of the Spirit.

I have never been ultra Calvinistic, pushing my
towards Antinomian fatality; nor have I at all mor
to the doctrine of Pelagian free will and human s
ciency; and in doctrine I am what I ever have been
gained only the more accurate and comprehensive kn
which use and study afford, and the facilities of prese
every man his portion in due season, as the result of
ence in the adaptation of particular truths to particul
of mind. All this, however, is nothing against posit
dence of defection. But no such evidence has been p
The chief evidence relied on is contained in my ser
the native character of man. But that sermon
designed to teach, and does not teach professedly, the
of original sin. It has no direct respect to that
There is not a word in the sermon designed to state,
prove, or apply, that doctrine. The subject of the s
THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ADULT MAN, and affords
least evidence of what my opinions are on the su
original sin. By the laws of interpretation, theref
are not permitted to travel out of the record, and
infants and *original sin* the language I have held wit
and exclusive reference to the total depravity of a

It was occasioned by local exigency in my congregation,—the restiveness of a man of talents and learning under the preaching of the doctrine of total depravity, especially in its denial of the native virtues and acceptable doings of unregenerate men. It was Pelagianism, in substance, that rose up against me; and the sermon was purposely constructed so as, by explaining and proving the doctrine of total depravity, to put it down. The correctness of this representation will be sustained by an analysis of the sermon.

ANALYSIS OF THE SERMON ON THE NATIVE CHARACTER OF MAN.*

Its title precludes any reference to original sin; it is, The Native CHARACTER OF MAN; meaning, of course, not his native constitution, but the *character* which all men first form who come up to personal action. *Native*, as applied to character, is sanctioned by correct theological use, and means the character which all men first sustain, in the exercise of their own powers, under the perverting influence of the fall.

The text has exclusive regard to adults, to regenerated men: "Whosoever loveth is born of God."

It is regarded in its exposition as holy love,—the fulfilling of the law,—the principle of evangelical obedience,—religion,—does not belong to men by nature,—is never a quality of his heart by natural birth, and is the result of a special divine interposition which makes him a child of God. Both the text and introduction, therefore, respect regeneration in adult man.

It is the object of the sermon to prove that man is not religious by nature,—meaning by man the race; and by "not religious by nature," that there is nothing in the constitution of adult man of which religion is ever the result;

* *Vide* page 53.

without a change of heart by the special influence of t
Ghost. The proof in every particular respects, evider
only, adult man and actual sin.

Universal experience evinces that the supreme lov
world constitutes the first character of man. All r
conscious that they set their affections first supremely
world, and not on God. Awakened sinners discov
they have no true love to God, and Christians can lo
to the time when evidently they had none.

The history of the world is inconsistent with the s
tion of native religion. Its idolatry, its animalism, g
intemperance, and lust,— its wars, frauds, violence, an
Love to God and man in the hearts of all by natur
not have made such a history as that of our world has

The Bible affords no testimony to the piety of man by
— says nothing good of the human heart,— not a syl

It ascribes to the heart of man by nature a c
inconsistent with religion,— *evil only*, deceitful, fully
evil, desperately wicked, full of madness.

The scriptural account of childhood shows that ma
born religious. Every imagination of the heart is e
his youth,— the wicked are estranged from the wor
religion born with them.

All the generic descriptions of the race are such as
religion as the native character of man.

Man is the generic of the race. But what is man
should be clean? or the son of man, that he sh
righteous?

The world is another generic term, characteristi
race. But it is a world which hated Christ, and whos
ship is enmity with God.

The flesh is another. But the carnal mind
against God.

The whole world is divided into classes, and all men are described as holy or unholy, righteous or wicked. But never as righteous first, but always as wicked first, and as becoming righteous by the power of the Spirit.

It was while we were enemies that Christ died for us; and it is only by being reconciled that we become religious.

It is the direct testimony of the omniscient God, that all have gone out of the way,— become vile; none that do good,— no, not one.

The alleged universal necessity of a change to qualify men for heaven is proof that they have no religion.

The reversal of this argument shows its force. If the *first accountable character of man is a religious character*, this entire body of evidence must be reversed. All men must be conscious of supreme love to God in early life, and conviction of sin and a moral renovation must be confined to those who have lost their religion, while the great body of Christians must be supposed to be such without the consciousness of any change. At the same time, the history of the world must be found to be a history of the fruits of piety; idolatry itself being only an aberration of religious affection in the fast friends of God, emulous to please their heavenly Father! It should, moreover, be found written upon the unerring page, "Every imagination of man's heart is *good* from his youth. The children of men have *not* gone out of the way. There is none that *doth not* understand and seek God, and do good; no, not one. The heart of the sons of men is full of *goodness*, out of which proceed *holy* thoughts, benevolent deeds, chastity, truth and reverence for God. What, therefore, is man, that he should be *wicked?* or he that is born of a woman, that he should *not* be religious? and pure is man, who drinketh in righteousness

like water! This is the *approbation*, that *darkness* is come into the world, and men have loved *light* more than darkness because their deeds are *good*. The whole world lieth in *righteousness*. He [Christ] was in the world, and the world *knew* him. O righteous Father, the world hath *known* thee. The friendship of the world is *friendship with God*. If the world hath loved you, ye know that it loved *me* before it loved you. Be ye, therefore, *conformed* to the world, and be ye *not transformed* by any renewing of your mind. My spirit shall *always* strive with man, because *he* is spirit. For that which is born of the *flesh* is *spirit*. Marvel not that I say unto you ye *must not* be born again. For the works of the *flesh* are *love*, *joy*, *peace*, *faith*; and the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, faith. In me,—that is, in my flesh,—dwelleth *every* good thing. Jesus Christ came to seek and to save those who were *not* lost; and he died *not* for his enemies,—*not* the just for the unjust, but for his righteous friends. The Gospel demands of men *no new character*; and all the doctrines of the Bible imply the early and universal piety of the human family."

All the inferences from the doctrine as thus proved refer to man as an adult subject of the government of God.

1. This discussion discloses the nature of depravity in unrenewed man: it consists in the want of love to God, and loving the creature more than God; in covetousness, which is idolatry, having other gods before him.

2. The depravity of adult man is voluntary, as opposed to a coërcive necessity of sinful choice.

3. It is positive. Not merely the want of love to God, but actual transgression against God. Active enmity.

4. It is great, as committed against a being of infinite excellence,—a violation of infinite obligation,—against the most

powerful motives in the most aggravating circumstances, and with unparalleled obstinacy of determination.

5. The depravity of man implied in the absence of religion is entire,—fallen adult man is totally depraved.

6. It illustrates the nature and necessity of regeneration, as being the commencement of holy love to God in the soul; its absence, death in sin; its presence, by the power of the Spirit, a resurrection from the dead. It is a change perceptible by its effects, and instantaneous in its commencement. There is a moment when he who loved the world more than God gives it up, and gives his heart to God,—a time when the METANOIA comes to pass.

This is my Pelagian sermon. A sermon on total adult depravity, and its nature as voluntary, consisting in enmity to God, selfishness, pride, covetousness, idolatry, impenitence, and unbelief.

The only alleged evidence of its Pelagianism is contained in what is said about the voluntariness of actual sin in adult man, as opposed to a *supposed created instinct*, or the *direct efficiency of God*, producing actual sin by an irresistible and fatal necessity; but from the text, subject, argument, and inferences of the discourse, it is undeniable that it has reference only to actual sin and total depravity, and has no direct reference to original sin at all. It was written in Connecticut, anterior to the controversies which now agitate the Church. It was demanded to encounter and resist the most specious Pelagian argument against the total depravity of man which I have ever seen. It was deduced from the various noble and amiable traits of human constitution and conduct which survive the fall, and are always urged as mat-
of-fact exceptions to the doctrine of total depravity: such
and admiration of moral fitness; approbation of truth

and justice; constitutional kindness and sympathy a
passion; the natural affections, which unite the fam
their tenderness and power; the amiable constitutio
peraments which survive the fall; honor and honesty
ings, and liberality as opposed to covetousness and
meanness; correct morality, power of conscience, pub
patriotism, great usefulness, accompanied by a copiou
of good works. The argument against total depr
written, and read, and commented on with great ab
in a manner which compelled me to provide the
With an especial view, then, to meet and refute the
gian matter-of-fact exceptions to the doctrine of to
depravity, I constructed the sermon which is now ad
evidence against me on the subject of original sin.
with the position that unrenewed men have no true
because that was a point conceded; and having estab
as I believed, I proceeded to draw the inferences wh
supposed, cut up by the roots these Pelagian virtue
ing any *claim* to be considered valid exceptions to
trine of total depravity; leaving in its full force the
that in adult man there dwelleth no good thing,
every imagination of his heart is evil only continually
that this sermon, written on purpose to put down
gian exceptions to total depravity, should be years
another and distant department of the Church, qu
admitted as a proof of my Pelagianism, would be an
of mental obliquity and injustice which I am sur
find a place in the judicatures of the Presbyterian
Even had it contained, in the ardor of argument, ex
not sufficiently guarded, and which by possibility
interpreted to mean heresy, no court, in the unbiased
of Christian candor, would permit them to be tr

from the main design and governing argument of the discourse. Much less where, though it was not the object of the sermon to establish the doctrine of original sin, it does so by proving two of the fundamental doctrines always relied on by the Orthodox Church, and by Edwards in particular, to prove the doctrine of original sin; I mean the doctrine of total depravity and the doctrine of regeneration. One of the main arguments of Edwards to prove original sin is the universality and entireness of actual sin; from which he infers that, anterior to actual agency, there is in all men, as a consequence of our federal alliance with Adam, some common cause, ground or reason, of universal and total actual depravity, which he calls "the influence of a prevailing, effectual tendency in the nature of man" to actual sin. And thus I prove the doctrine of original sin,— incidentally, indeed, but really,— by proving the actual, universal, total depravity of man. There must be, and there is, in man, something anterior to voluntary action, which is the ground and reason that the will of fallen man does from the beginning act wrong. To say that all men sin actually, and entirely, and universally, and forever, until renewed by the Holy Ghost, and that against the strongest possible motives, merely because they are free agents, and are able to do so,— and that there is in their nature, as affected by the fall, no cause or reason of the certainty,— is absurd. It is to ascribe the most stupendous concurrence of perverted action in all the adult millions of mankind to nothing. The thing to be accounted for is the phenomenon of an entire series of universal actual sin; and to ascribe the universal and entire obliquity of the human will to the simple ability of choosing wrong, is to ascribe the moral obliquity of a lost world to nothing.

This was the point of the controversy in Edwards on the

Will, against the Arminian theory of self-determination. The free agency claimed by the Arminian was one which excluded not only force and absolute necessity of nature from deciding the will, but denied the existence of any *internal constitution* or *objective influence of motive*, as connected with our constitutional susceptibilities, in securing the existence or determining the moral qualities of choice.

Edwards affirmed that there must be, and is, anterior to the exercise of free agency, some constitution of the agent and relevancy of motive, as the ground and reason of the certainty of choice, though not a coërcive cause; and his antagonists deny that there is *any cause, ground or reason* of the certainty of choice, holy or unholy, in or out of man, anterior to its existence — assuming the necessity of a perfect indifference of will in all cases immediately anterior to volition, and the actual uncertainty of choice, as affected by any cause or reason anterior to its existence; and the necessity to its freedom and accountability that in every case it should be the simple, uninfluenced energy of the mind itself. And what Edwards attempts to prove, and does prove, in his treatise on the Will and on original sin, is, that to choice of any kind there is in the agent some constitution which is the ground or reason that motives become, not, indeed, the coërcive causes, but the certain occasions of volition; and that, in man, before the fall, there was a constitution which was the ground and reason of the unperverted exercise of his will and affections in loving and obeying God; and that by the fall a change was effected in the nature of man anterior to voluntary action which is the cause or reason of the universal certainty of the perversion of the will and affections of fallen man; and that the antecedents of perfect actual holiness and entire actual *sin are properly* denominated, with reference to those certain

results in action, a holy or an unholy nature: only guarding, as our Confession does, alike against the Antinomian fatality of the will by *force*, and the Arminian self-determination, without any antecedent constitutional cause, ground or reason, within or without.

These views, as held by Edwards, and corroborated by our own Confession and the standard writers of our Church, comprehend the doctrine which I have always believed and preached; and never have I knowingly and intentionally, at any time, expressed a sentiment, verbally or in writing, to the contrary.

The falseness and folly of the common notion of the self-determination of the mind by its own energy of will, without any cause or occasion even, is sufficiently manifest, in its opposition to the possibility of moral government on the part of God, or the possibility of praise or blame on the part of man: for moral government is the government of a lawgiver, influencing the will and conduct of subjects by the influence of laws, rewards, punishments, and administration. But if nothing may approach the mind, in the form of influence, having any tendency to destroy the dignified indifference of the will, or secure the certainty or probability even of volition, then, though self-government might exist, the government of God could not; and nothing but the most perfect anarchy could exist as the accidental, uncaused, and unoccasioned action of millions of independent minds, acting without any cause, ground or reason. Indeed, it would render choice itself impossible, as it supposes a mind without susceptibility or desire of anything, or one thing more than another,—a condition of mind precluding the possibility of choice, which always implies excited desire, and a prospect of some gratification, and without which man would be less capable of choice

than a snail or an oyster: and even if he could choo
out desire, reason or motive, the offspring of such
script mental anomaly would be no more praise
worthy than the motions of a pendulum or the tick
watch,—uncertain of being till they come into be
coming without any cause, ground, or reason,—bubl
the bottom of the muddy lake might as well be reg
accountable and worthy of praise or blame, as the v
men.

I adopt, therefore, with approbation, the language
fessor Hodge, in his Commentary on Romans:

Of all the facts ascertained by the history of the world, it
to be among the plainest that men are born destitute of a disposi
their chief good in God, and with a disposition to make self-g
the great end of their being. Even reason, conscience, natura
are less universal characteristics of our fallen race. For there
and moral monsters often to be met with; but for a child of A
fluenced by the special grace of God, to delight in his Maker, as
of his soul, from the first dawn of his moral being, is absolut
example among all the thousands of millions of men who have
our world. If experience can establish anything, it establishe
of the scriptural declaration, "that which is born of the flesh is
would seem no less plain that this cannot be the original a
state of man,—that human nature is not now what it was w
ceeded from the hand of God. Everything else which God
answers the end of its being; but human nature, since th
uniformly worked badly; in no one instance has it spontaneo
to God as its chief good. It cannot be believed that God
man; that there has been no perversion of his faculties,—no l
original and guiding disposition or tendency of his mind. It
credited that men are now what Adam was, when he first open
on the wonders of creation and the glories of God. Reason, sc
experience, therefore, all concur in support of the common doct
Christian world, that the race fell in Adam, lost their original
and *became prone to evil* as the sparks to fly upward.

But, in addition to this argumentative implication of original sin, I do, in the very passage claimed to deny it, expressly allude to and recognize its existence as a reality, only limiting its action as Edwards and our Confession do, as not forcing the will, or by any absolute necessity of nature determining it to evil. I say:

> Whatever effect, therefore, the fall of man may have had on his race, it has not had the effect to render it impossible for man to love God religiously; and whatever may be the early constitution of man, there is nothing in it, and nothing withheld from it, which renders [actual] disobedience unavoidable, and [actual] obedience impossible.

Finally, the language of the paragraph, interpreted by the laws of just exposition, does not teach or imply a denial of the doctrine of original sin.

I have already shown that my sermon on the native character of man was not designed to have any reference to original sin; that it spake only of the present, actual condition of adult mind, and that the question how a man came into such a state was not so much as touched; that I was teaching the existence of total depravity against a wily and practised antagonist, with the sole view of cutting up his false Pelagian positions, and proving total depravity and the necessity of regeneration.

To comprehend fully the import of my language, it must be understood that there were two philosophical theories in respect to the cause of adult actual depravity: the one holding it to be a *moral instinct, a created faculty of the soul*, as really as any other *faculty*, which controlled the will according to its moral nature, as the helm governs the ship, and upon which the will could no more reäct than the ship can reäct the helm; the other, a philosophy which discards this

instinctive, involuntary moral taste, and substitutes t *efficiency of God*, for the *creation* of all exercises of choice, *good* and *bad*.

These philosophical theories were prevalent long b controversy arose. The question concerning original not discussed in my congregation; touching that que was as quiet as the sleep of infancy. The question the voluntariness of the depravity of adult man. I in remembrance, and then the import of the sermon c misunderstood. After proving that the depravity o very great, I proceed to say that it is voluntary; doctrine I advance in opposition to the philosoph represents man's *actual sin*, *his actual total depr* being the *necessary coërcive result of a moral ins of divine efficiency*. The question was, whether th ness and enmity against God, and wordliness and pri obstructed evangelical obedience in adult man, a regeneration by the Spirit indispensable, was a state produced and continued by a coërcive necessity; ar cordance with the Bible and the Confession of Faith whole Orthodox Church, I say — no! — but, "that endued the will of fallen man with that natural libe it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity determined, to good or evil." It is this nature of ac in a state of personal accountability and active depra I am speaking of, as the subject and whole argume sermon show, in every sentence and word of the pag and it is of this total actual depravity of man, whic regeneration by the Spirit necessary, that I say it c the product of "*an unavoidable necessity;*" and actual holiness and sin that I am speaking, when I s *the existence of a holy* or a sinful nature percep

standing, conscience and choice, are indispensable. And is this heresy? Does any one believe that personal accountability, and actual sin, and holiness, can exist without perception, understanding, conscience, and choice; and that the Bible and the Confession of Faith teach it?

Dr. Greene says, "The parties in this controversy are agreed that all actual sin is voluntary, and therefore criminal and inexcusable."— *Ch. Adv.* 1831, p. 348.

Social, representative *liability, and a just desert of punishment in that sense*, is a possibility and a reality; but a *social liability*, and *personal demerit*, are quite different things; and if it shall be made to appear that the Bible and the Confession do teach the possibility of personal actual sin and just punishment, without the existence of the faculties of perception, understanding, conscience and choice, it will, as I believe, be regarded by the whole Church of God as a new discovery.

I call this actual depravity of man *native*, in accordance with the language of the Bible and the most approved theological writers, to indicate its universality, as what all men come to by nature,—that is, by the operation and influence of that change produced in the nature of man by the fall,—to mark its positiveness, as including actual enmity, selfishness, pride and idolatry, instead of a mere want of conformity to the law of God,—and especially to designate its permanence as compared to successive acts of choice, and its fearful immutability to all finite power. The Scriptures speak of the permanence and immutability of man's actual depravity—as a *heart* full of madness and of evil—fully set to do evil; and Turretin calls it a "voluntary and culpable habit of will;" and Edwards says, "By a general and habitual moral I mean an inability in the heart to all exercises or will of that nature or kind, through a fixed and

habitual inclination, or an habitual or stated defect, of a certain kind of inclination."

Now, not only has all I have said on the page obj a reference to the actual sin of adult man as the g the necessity of regeneration, but it is all so guarded down, and related to the subject of actual sin, that i no possibility be torn away from it, and attached to th of original sin. For, in the very statements I ma the voluntary nature of which I am speaking, I allu fall and original sin, and admit and include its among the causes which fortify adult man against su to God, as I have more fully done in my expositio moral inability of man in this discussion, only ma reservation which the Confession makes — that ori does not force the will to actual sin, nor by any abs cessity of nature determine it to evil, so as that G author of sin, or that violence is offered to the will of tures; or the liberty or contingency of second causes (t of choosing life or death) taken away, but is rather est

The declarations, that there is a time when actual mences, and that the first sin is voluntary, uncoërc cusable, and might have been and ought to have beer as really as any of the actual sins that followed it, w apprehend, alarm any large proportion of the Churc distinction between original and actual sin has been in the Orthodox Church; and the more common opi suppose, has always been that actual sin does not c from the womb, and that the time when social li succeeded by personal demerit for actual transgressi and cannot be exactly known to any but the eye What I have asserted is, that whenever personal accou *does commence*, in the sight of God the sinner is a

and inexcusable for his first as really as for any other actual sin.

I perceive that what I wrote ten years ago, with my eye wholly on the subject of man's nature as an actual sinner and totally depraved, read by a person at the present time, in a state of alarm and excitement about the Pelagian heresy on the subject of original sin, might, if not read with great care and attention, be liable to be misunderstood, as denying that depravity of nature which is peculiar to original sin: but the moment the laws of candid, correct interpretation, are applied, the possibility of such an interpretation is precluded, and the true limit, meaning, and intent of my language, is made apparent. For it cannot be that a sermon professedly against the Pelagian notions of virtue and good works in man, as exceptions to the doctrine of total depravity, and containing a formal and labored argument in the defence of that doctrine, and inferring from it the necessity of regeneration, and an anti-Pelagian instantaneous regeneration by the special influence of the Holy Spirit, should be found intentionally teaching the very doctrine it set out to oppose, and opposing the very doctrine it was constructed to establish.

Were any evidence beside the internal evidence of the discourse itself necessary, it is contained in a sermon written about the same time that this sermon on native character was written, and written professedly on original sin. The following are my comments on several passages in Romans v.:

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Adam was created holy and placed in a state of probation—the consequences of which were to extend not only himself, but to his posterity. If he continued holy, they ld be born holy. If he became a sinner, his children s born depraved. In the hour of temptation he fell,

and LOST FOR A WORLD the inheritance of life, and upon it the sad inheritance of depravity and woe.

"For if by ONE man's offence death reigned by How did death reign by ONE man's offence, if the dep his race was not somehow a consequence of his sin' posterity are born holy (innocent), and became sin their own act alone, uninfluenced by what Adam death enters the world not by one man, but by every

"The judgment was by one man to condemnatio is, the sin of one man, and one single act of sin, subj posterity to a nature prone to sin, as the consequence

I give these quotations to show that though, whe on the total actual depravity of man, my expressi have misled some to understand me as denying orig I did, at the same period, when writing professedly subject, recognize the doctrine fully and strongly, an time was never, to my knowledge, misunderstood.

What follows is from my lecture on the Fall and sequences, delivered in Boston and Cincinnati:

By the appointment of God, the character and destiny of inseparably connected with the conduct of Adam. He was in s the federal head and representative of his posterity, that, ac God's appointment, had Adam continued holy, his posterity w continued holy, as his disobedience has drawn after it the defect race. The universal bias of man to evil is denominated a nature, on account of its universal tendencies to actual sin.

Here I might stop; for I am under no obligation teer statements of my opinions in respect to the su which I am accused. My errors are to be shown dence; and I say that, in this case, the evidence ha failed; and I might, therefore, repel the charge of h *not established.* But I have no secrets on this w

in respect to any of the religious opinions which I hold. At my time of life, and especially under the circumstances in which I am placed, both as pastor of a flock and an instructor of the rising ministry of the Church, I have no right to any secret opinions. I scorn concealment, and therefore I will declare with all openness the things which I do believe. The Presbytery shall *not suspect* me of being a heretic. If I am a heretic, they shall *know* it. You shall have, in respect to my views of original sin, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

1. As to the federal or representative character of Adam, and the covenant with him and his posterity. — I have, through my whole public life, believed and taught that the constitution and character of his entire posterity, as perverted or unperverted, depended on his obedience or defection; and that he was in *this respect*, and by God's appointment, constitutionally the head and representative of his race. And that, in this sense, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned *in him*, and fell with him in his first transgression; that is, their character and destiny were decided by his deed.

For a more ample expression of my views, I submit the remarks of Dr. Bishop, President of the Miami University, on the subject of *Social Liabilities*, the best name ever devised for the idea; — a name which, I hope, we shall all remember, as it is calculated to avoid much error which has arisen from the use of other phraseology. In respect to the book from which I am about to quote, I heartily thank that great and good man for having condensed so much truth into so small a compass; and I do believe that the simple substitution of this technic, "social liability," would carry us all of the swamp together. For we in fact think, and ought

to speak, the same thing. After illustrating the soc ities of men, for the conduct of others in the family, mercial relations, and as parts of a nation, and as s moral beings affected by the nameless influences of tl tian example or evil deeds of our fellow-men, he pr say:

1. That every man is, by his very nature, intimately conne great variety of ways, with thousands of his fellow-men whom h seen; and that the conduct and the character of a single indi have an extensive and a lasting influence upon millions of his f though far removed from him, both as to time and place.

2. That these liabilities may be classed under two gene namely, Natural and Positive. The son inherits a diseased or body, and, in many cases, also an intellectual or moral char generation after generation sustains the character of their an what may be called a natural influence. Like produces and con But in commercial and political transactions lasting and import ties are created and continued by positive arrangements.

3. That, in all cases of social liabilities, individual and rep responsibility are always kept distinct. Nor is it, in the most very difficult thing to have a clear and distinct conception of distinct responsibilities.

Every citizen of these United States who thinks at all mus himself and his children, and his children's children, are deepl in the conduct and character of the President of the United St time being. An able and virtuous president, with an able an faithful cabinet, must be a great blessing to the millions, botl and unborn, on both sides of the Atlantic. And, on the oth weak and a wicked president and cabinet must be the occasio ceivable inconveniences and real privations and sufferings t millions, both of the present and succeeding generations. But ever thought of attributing to himself, or to his children, the pe dom, or intellectual ability, or inflexible integrity, which has r character of any distinguished executive officer; nor, on the o has he ever thought of being charged individually, or of children charged individually, with the weakness or wickedne *executive officer.* He and his children, and his neighbors an

dren, feel and acknowledge that they are personally and deeply involved in the consequences of the official acts of these men, whether these consequences are of a beneficial or a hurtful tendency; but, at the same time, individual and personal merit and demerit, and individual and personal responsibility, are clearly understood, and never, for a moment, *merged in social and representative transactions.*

From a view of the above facts it follows:

4. That the terms *guilty* and *innocent* must, with every thinking man, be used in a *different sense*, when they are applied to responsibilities incurred by the *conduct of another, from that in which they are used when they are applied to personal conduct.* In the former application, *guilty* can only mean liability to suffer *punishment*, and *innocent* to be not liable. But in the latter application they mean, having violated, or having not violated, some moral or positive commandment. In the one case the terms apply to a personal act, and to personal character; but in the other they only mark the *nature and the consequences of a certain act or acts, as these consequences are felt by another person.*

5. In every case of social liability, *unity* is recognized. The individuals concerned may be millions, or only two, and they may be in every other respect and bearing distinct and separate; but in the particular case in which liability applies they are in law only *one moral person.*

The father and son, the ancestor and the descendant, have only one common nature, or *one* common right. In commercial transactions the company is *one*, though composed of many individuals; and the nation, acting by the constituted authorities, with all her other varieties and differences, while a nation, continues *one* and indivisible.

And here let me say that this principle is recognized in the relation of Adam to his posterity, and of theirs to him; so that the effects which fell on him as a punishment fell on them as a calamity.

There is, in my apprehension, something of this constitutional social liability pervading the whole moral universe, and inseparable from the nature of mind and moral government, and the effects of temptation, character and example. It is probable that rational beings, constituted as they are, cannot be brought together so that the action of one will not in

some degree affect the character of others. Whether it was a positive appointment merely, or whether it was an inevitable effect flowing from the nature of things, or, which is more probable, the united result of both,— such was the constitution established by God between Adam and his seed; so that if Adam should stand, all his children would retain their integrity; but if he should fall, they would fall with him. And we may well apply to the fall of our first parents the affecting language of Mark Antony over Cæsar's body:

> "O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
> Then you, and I, and all of us, fell down."

The constitution was equally certain both ways; and in this respect it was just and equal. If, then, it be asked whether I hold that Adam was the federal head of his posterity, I answer, Certainly he was; because that which he did decided what was to be the character and conduct of all his posterity. If the inquiry is made, whether I admit the imputation of Adam's sin,— if imputation be understood to mean that Adam's posterity were present in him, and thus sinned in him,— I answer, No; and Dr. Wilson answers, No. And here we are agreed. For if mankind were present in Adam, and in that sense sinned in him, who does not see that their sin was *actual*, not original,— *personal*, and not derived, or transmitted, or propagated?

Again, if by original sin be meant that Adam's personal moral qualities were transferred to his posterity (a theory which, like the other, had once its day), I reply that I do not and cannot believe any such thing; neither does Dr. Wilson believe it. And here let me say that all the alarm and all the odium which have been excited in relation to the divines in New England have arisen from two things: their

opposition to the notion of personal identity with Adam; and their denial of the transfer of his moral qualities to his posterity. But neither of these things is involved in the charges preferred against me by Dr. Wilson.

What, then, is the true doctrine of original sin? It is the obnoxiousness of Adam's posterity to the penal consequences of his transgression; to all that came in that stream of evils which his offence let in upon the world. The same change of constitution, of nature and character, which was wrought in him by his transgression, appears in them through all their generations. This liability, this exposedness to punishment, is in the Confession called "guilt;" but that word, as then used, conveyed theologically a different meaning from what is now usually attached to the term. By guilt we now understand the desert of punishment for personal sin; but this is not the sense of the word in the Confession of Faith; there it means *liability to evil* in consequence of Adam's sin. This was another of the spots where I stumbled once at the language of the Confession. I could not consent to the punishment in my person of the guilt of Adam's sin, as if it were my own. To that I do not now consent. That, I now believe, the Confession of Faith does not teach; but I cordially receive it as teaching that Adam was our representative indirectly; that on his breaking God's righteous commands, the curse, which fell like a thunderbolt on the offender, struck all his posterity and all the animal world, struck the ground on which he stood, and the whole world in which he dwelt.

"Earth felt the wound."

This social liability is illustrated in the fall of angels.) influence of one master spirit drew away (as it would

seem, from some passages in Scripture) one-third the heavenly host. Let sedition and revolt take pl nation,—who gets it up? Does the entire mass of t rise spontaneously and simultaneously, by one impulse? No. Some leading mind first fires the tı though one-half the population may ultimately peri the reäction of the government, their death is to l up to one master-spirit as the mover and promot whole commotion. Let us never forget the maxin worthy to be written in letters of gold,—"Indivi representative responsibility are always to be kept I adopt this language of Dr. Bishop, and lay it in position of my own views with respect to the cha Adam, to guilt as imputed, and to punishment as tl quence of our social relations. I have always ad language of Edwards, as correctly stating the truth subject:

> In consequence of Adam's sin, all mankind do constantly, i without fail in any one instance, run into the moral evil, which their own utter and eternal perdition, and a total privation of G and suffering of his vengeance and wrath.

So that the real doctrine is not that Adam's poste one in personal identity, or personally guilty by a tr sinful moral qualities or actions; but simply that the curse of the law that fell on Adam fell indirect posterity in the loss of original righteousness, whi have been their inheritance had Adam obeyed, change of the constitution of human nature fro results the certainty of entire actual sin. Now, particular change was which furnished the groun *absolute certainty* that all mankind would run in

not profess to understand. Paul, in the fifth chapter to the Romans, states the facts of the case, as involving, through the fall, a nature spoiled, and under such an effectual bias, that, as soon as the mind acts, it acts wrong. This is all that I can say touching original sin. All is confusion and darkness beyond this. I have no light, and pretend to no knowledge. And surely there is no heresy in ignorance. I always believed in original sin, and that Adam was the federal head of his posterity; and although I have not used generally that particular phrase, I believe as much in the truth it is intended to convey as any man in the Church. I believe that God legislated wisely for Adam; that the effects of his fall reached all his posterity, and produced in them such a change that the human mind, which before obeyed, thenceforward disobeyed; and that, in consequence of the change which took place in Adam himself, the bias to holiness which, had he stood, would have been the blessed inheritance of all his children, was utterly lost, so that they now inherit a corrupt nature. I have always called it so. I have expressly denominated it a depraved nature. I believe they inherit this not as actual personal sin; that it comes upon them not as a punishment of their personal sin, but as a political evil would come upon the people of the United States from the evil conduct of the chief magistrate. In a word, that we share the character of our fallen progenitor, and all the deplorable effects of his transgression.

The following additional quotations will show that these views are the received doctrines of the Church:

Turretin (as quoted by Hodge on Romans), *Theol. Elench. Quæst.* IX. p. 678, says: "Imputation is either of something foreign to us, or of something properly our own. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is ours; in which sense God imputes to sinners their transgres-

sions. Sometimes that is imputed which is without us, and not by ourselves; thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be imp and our sins are imputed to him, although he has neither sin in h we righteousness. Here we speak of the latter kind of imputati former; because we are treating of a sin committed by Adam, n The ground of this imputation is the union between Adam and hi This union is not a mysterious identity of person, but, 1. "Nat is the father, and we are the children. 2. Political and forensic, the representative head and chief of the whole human race. The therefore, of imputation, is not only the natural connection w between us and Adam, since, in that case, all his sins might be us, but mainly the moral and federal, in virtue of which God e covenant with him as our head."

Tuckney (*Prælectiones*, p. 234): "We are counted righteo Christ in the same manner that we are counted guilty thro The latter is by imputation; therefore, also, the former." "W foolish or blasphemous as to say, or even to think, that the imp eousness of Christ makes us formally and subjectively righteous.

Owen (in his work on Justification, p. 236) says: "Things not our own originally, inherently, may yet be imputed to us, by the rule of righteousness. And this may be done upon a doul unto those whose they are,—1. Federal; 2. Natural. Things d may be imputed unto others, *propter relationem fœderalem*, b covenant relation between them. So the sin of Adam was impute posterity. And the ground hereof is, that we stood in the sam with him who was our head and representative." On p. 24 "This imputation (of Christ's righteousness) is not the tran transfusion of the righteousness of another into them which ar tified, that they should become perfectly and inherently righteo For it is impossible that the righteousness of one should be tran another, to become his subjectively and inherently." Agai "As we are made guilty by Adam's actual sin, which is not i us, but only imputed to us, so we are made righteous by the ri of Christ, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us." he says, "Nothing is intended by the imputation of sin unto a rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due un As the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subj to punishment." It is one of his standing declarations, "To

culpæ reus (that is, to be guilty of another's crime) MAKES NO MAN A SINNER."

KNAPP (in his Lectures on Theology, sect. 76) says, in stating what the doctrine of imputation is: "God's imputing the sin of our first parents to their descendants amounts to this: God punishes the descendants on account of the sin of their first parents." This he gives as a mere historical statement of the nature of the doctrine, and the form in which its advocates maintained it.

ZACHARIÆ (*Bib. Theologie*, vol. II. p. 394) says, "If God allows the punishment which Adam incurred to come on all his descendants, he imputes his sin to them all. And in this sense Paul maintains that the sin of Adam is imputed to all, because the punishment of the one offence of Adam has come upon all."

BRETSCHNEIDER, when stating the doctrine of the Reformers, as presented in the various creeds published under their authority, says that they regarded justification, which includes the idea of imputation, as a forensic or judicial act of God, by which the relation of man to God, and not the man himself, was changed. And imputation of righteousness they described as "That judgment of God, according to which he treats us as though we had not sinned, but had fulfilled the law, or as though the righteousness of Christ was ours." This view of justification they constantly maintained, in opposition to the Papists, who regarded it as a moral change, consisting in what they called the infusion of righteousness.

I shall now show that this is the view entertained by the Professors of the Princeton Seminary:

"What we deny, therefore, is, first, that this doctrine involves any mysterious union with Adam, any confusion of our identity with his, so that his act was properly and personally our act; and, secondly, that the moral turpitude of that sin was transferred from him to us, — we deny the possibility of any such transfer. These are the two ideas which the Spectator and others consider as necessarily involved in the doctrine of imputation, and for rejecting which they represent us as having abandoned the old doctrine on the subject."

"The words *guilt and punishment* are those particularly referred to. The former we had defined to be liability or exposedness to punishment. We did not mean to say that the word never included the idea of moral turpitude or criminality. We were speaking of its theological usage. It is

very possible that a word may have one sense in common life, an somewhat modified in particular sciences."

"Punishment, according to our views, is an evil inflicted on in the execution of a judicial sentence, on account of sin. That is used in this sense, for evils thus inflicted on one person for t of another, cannot be denied. It would be easy to fill a volume w ples of this usage." — *Biblical Repertory*, pp. 346, 440, 441.

HODGE ON ROMANS. — The doctrine of imputation is clearly this passage. This doctrine does not include the idea of a myster tity of Adam and his race, nor that of a transfer of the moral tu his sin to his descendants. It does not teach that his offence wa ally or properly the sin of all men, or that his act was, in any n sense, the act of his posterity. Neither does it imply, in refere righteousness of Christ, that his righteousness becomes perso inherently ours, or that his moral excellence is in any way tr from him to believers. The sin of Adam, therefore, is no groun remorse, and the righteousness of Christ is no ground of self-co in those to whom it is imputed. This doctrine merely teaches virtue of the union, representative and natural, between Adan posterity, his sin is the ground of their condemnation, that is subjection to penal evils; and that, in virtue of the union betw and his people, his righteousness is the ground of their justifica 221.

Whatever evil the Scriptures represent as coming upon us o of Adam, they regard as penal; they call it death, which is th term by which any penal evil is expressed.

It is not, however, the doctrine of the Scriptures, nor of the churches, nor of our standards, that the corruption of nature of w speak is any depravation of the soul, or an essential attribute, o sion of any positive evil. "Original sin," as the confessions of th ers maintain, "is not the substance of man, neither his soul nor b is it anything infused into his nature by Satan, as poison is m wine; it is not an essential attribute, but an accident, that is, which does not exist of itself, an incidental quality, &c." — *Bret* vol. II. p. 30. These confessions teach that original righteous punishment of Adam's sin, was lost, *and by that defect* the t sin, or corrupt disposition, or corruption of nature, is occasioned they speak of original sin as being, first, negative, that is, the lo eousness; *and, secondly*, positive, or corruption of nature, —

latter, they state, is to be understood, not the infusion of anything in itself *sinful*, but an actual tendency or disposition to evil, resulting from the loss of righteousness.—pp. 229, 230.

We derive from Adam a nature destitute of any native tendency to the love and service of God; and since the soul, from its nature, is filled, as it were, with susceptibilities, dispositions, or tendencies to certain modes of acting, or to objects out of itself, if destitute of the governing tendency or disposition to holiness and God, it has, of course, a tendency to self-gratification and sin.—p. 231.

I now refer to a judicial decision of the General Assembly, in the case of Mr. Balch.

The transferring of personal sin or righteousness has never been held by Calvinistic divines, nor by any person in our Church, as far as is known to us. But, with regard to his (Mr. B.'s) doctrine of original sin, it is to be observed that he is erroneous in representing personal corruption as not derived from Adam; making Adam's sin to be imputed to his posterity, in consequence of a corrupt nature *already possessed*, and derived from we know not what; thus in effect setting aside the idea of Adam's being the federal head or representative of his descendants, and the whole doctrine of the covenant of works.—*Assembly's Digest*, p. 180.

My next authority is Dr. Wilson himself.

Let us guard here against some mistakes. The doctrine of a union of representation does not involve in it the idea of personal identity. It does not mean that Adam and his posterity are the same identical persons. It does not mean that his act was properly and personally their act. Nor does it mean that the moral turpitude of Adam's sin was transferred to his descendants. The transfer of moral character makes no part of the doctrine of imputation.

And now, supposing this to be the just and true intent of the terms, as indicated by the established laws of exposition, and confirmed by the standard writers of our Church, acquiesced in and corroborated by her highest judicature, then I believe and teach that "Adam being the root of all mankind, [illegible]t of his sin was imputed, and the same death in sin

and corrupted nature conveyed to all his posterity, de
from him by ordinary generation:" that from "this
corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disal
made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to al
proceed all actual transgressions; and that the coven
made with Adam, not only for himself but for his p
all mankind, descending from him by ordinary ge
sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgr
that the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell
in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original r
ness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which
monly called original sin, together with all actual t
sions which proceed from it; and that by the fall of
parents "all mankind lost communion with God, a
his wrath and curse, and so made *liable* to all the mi
this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell fore

I believe also, and always have believed and tau
infants are the subjects of original sin, and, as disti
from actual sin, consisting in the "influence of a p
effectual tendency in their nature" to actual sin;
on account of this prevalent tendency, it is, in the I
Confession, and the common language of men, justly
nated a depraved nature; and that, being thus depr
considered in their social liabilities as one with Ada
no more than adults, could be saved without an atone
the special influence of the Holy Spirit in regene
overcome and remove this bias to evil of original co
and secure the unperverted exercise of their voluntar
in spiritual obedience, and ultimately be prepared f
conformity to the will of God in heaven. I sa
attended the funeral of an infant without an expre
nition of these views upon infant depravity, and the

and regeneration as the only ground of hope that they are saved.

I close this discussion in respect to original sin with the following concise epitome of my own views, which, as I understand and believe, have been and are the received doctrines of the Church of God in every age:

1. Original sin is the effect of Adam's sin upon the constitution of his race, in consequence of his being their federal head and representative by a divine appointment or covenant.

2. It does not consist in the sinfulness of matter, according to the Gnostics, or in the sinfulness of the soul's essence, according to the Manicheans: but

3. It consists in the perversion of those constitutional powers and susceptibilities which in Adam before the fall eventuated in actual and perfect obedience, and which in their perverted condition by the fall eventuate in actual and total depravity.

4. It is in its nature involuntary; and yet, though certain and universal in its influence to pervert the will and affections, does neither force the will, nor by an absolute necessity of nature determine it to evil, or impair obligation, or excuse actual sin. It descends from Adam, by natural generation, through all the race.

It is a bias or tendency of nature to actual sin, which baffles all motives and all influence short of Omnipotence, to prevent its eventuation in total actual depravity, or to restore the perverted will and affections to holy obedience.

It is this bias to evil, the effect of the fall, which, though impaired by regeneration, is not annihilated, but remains in the regenerate,— which, combined with the habits of actual sin, constitutes the law in the members warring against the law of the mind, preventing, until the soul at death is made meet

for heaven, the unbiased and unperverted exercise of
and affections, in perfect accordance with the moral l

It is denominated by Edwards, and justly, an ex
evil and depraved nature, as being in all its tendenci
its actual results adverse to the law; and on the g
our alliance with Adam, our federal head, and o
liability, it results in that choice and character whic
God's wrath and curse, including the evils of the life
is, death itself, and the pains of hell forever.

Such, on the subject of Original Sin, are the view
have always held and taught since I have been in the
nor has any evidence been produced that I have eve
time believed or taught the contrary. The entire
relied on is a misapprehension and misinterpretatio
passage adduced from my sermon; and there is
evidence, not a syllable of evidence, to sustain the
Should it be inquired why I did not explain my
original sin, and the misconceptions of my discours
Wilson, as I have now done, and save ourselves
Church the affliction and annoyance of such a contr
answer that I often assured Dr. Wilson that he misu
my views and communications on that subject, and
him, respectfully and earnestly, three or four times,
me to make the requisite explanations, and was as ofte

On the subject of TOTAL DEPRAVITY my doctrine
evidence relied on for its support, are sufficiently ma
the sermon on the Native Character of Man.*

It includes the absence of all holiness,—the wan
formity unto, and the actual transgression of the law

It is universal—there being not a mere man, o
millions of Adam's posterity, that hath lived and no

* *Vide* page 53.

It is entire; every imagination of the thoughts of the heart being evil only,—there being none that do good,—no, not one.

It is positive—as including the actual preference of the creature to the Creator, which is enmity against God.

It is voluntary—though occasioned by original sin, the will is not forced, nor by any necessity determined to good or evil. But, though voluntary, with the possibility of turning to God, it is spontaneously immutable to any motive but the Word of God made effectual by his Spirit.

It was this view of total depravity, excluding all native virtue from the heart, motives, words, and deeds of man, which produced the reaction that occasioned the sermon on the native character of man.

I taught, with the Confession, that "works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet, because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner according to the Word, nor to a right end,—the glory of God,—they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God. And yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God."

It is a doctrine which, in various forms, I have explained, and proved, and preached, and applied, more than any other, as being especially the one by which the commandment comes and sin revives.

In respect to the doctrine of REGENERATION, or Effectual Calling, I am not apprized, precisely, what is the form of error which I am supposed to hold. But, if it be the Pelagian, as I conclude from the analogy of my supposed heresy on the subject of original sin, it must be that I deny that regenera-

tion is a radical change of character; but that it i special sense a work of God, save only as he has prov instruction and motives which, by their natural influe human endeavor, produce religion; and, of course, assert regeneration to be a gradual, and not an instan change.

To all such apprehensions I reply, that nothing more contrary to the entire course of my faith and on the subject, as all the Churches know which ha successively under my pastoral care, and all men w attended my ministry with sufficient constancy to rec image and body of my preaching. There is no subjec the kindred one of total depravity, which I have dw with such copiousness of explanation, proofs, and application,— line upon line, in season and out of s as the subject of regeneration; insomuch that m hearers would as soon think of suspecting me of ath of Pelagianism, on the subject of regeneration.

That I have not been fully understood on a single perceive; but that I shall be understood, and under teaching the doctrine in accordance with the Bible, Confession, and the generally received opinion of the C Church, I have a comfortable hope.

I am aware that a man's simple professions, whe suspicion of heresy, are but a poor defence against the cations of imagination and fear, especially when divis tumults and swellings exist; there may be for a little to choose between being suspected of heresy, ar guilty of it. Instead, therefore, of making mere dec of my belief, I shall state and illustrate my views several topics belonging to the subject of regenerat

have been accustomed to state them in my discourses from the pulpit, and in my lectures to the students under my care. These topics are:

1. The nature;
2. The efficient cause;
3. The effectual means; and
4. The necessity of regeneration.

1. THE NATURE OF REGENERATION. — By this I mean the nature of the change which is produced in the subject by the Spirit of God. This, according to my understanding of the Bible, is correctly disclosed in the doctrine of effectual calling as taught in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as including "the enlightening of the minds of men spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh,— renewing their wills, and determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ,— yet so as they come freely, being made willing by his grace,— in his accepted time inviting and drawing them to Jesus Christ by his word and Spirit,— so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able truly to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein;" or, as the Shorter Catechism teaches, more concisely, and with no less correctness:

> Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered us in the Gospel.

The substance of what is taught by this various phraseology is, that a change is effected in regeneration in respect to man's chief *end*, in turning from the supreme love of self to

the supreme love of God,— from gratifying and exalti
to gratifying and exalting God,— a giving up and
from the world, in all its pomp and vanities, as the chi
and returning to God as the chosen portion of th
withdrawing the affections from things below, and
them on things above; ceasing to lay up our trea
earth, and laying it up in heaven; and so grieving
hating our past sins, as that we turn from them all
purposing and endeavoring to walk with God in all tl
of new obedience.

This, it will not, I think, be doubted, comprehen
rectly the moral change which takes place in regenera

2. THE AUTHOR OR EFFICIENT CAUSE OF REGENERA
GOD. By efficient cause I mean that power without w
other influence is vain, and by which means otherwis
tent are made effectual. The power, then, which in a
is the immediate antecedent and effectual cause of regen
is the special influence of the Holy Spirit. It is ca
Holy Spirit, not by way of any preëminent personal
lence, but as the divine agent to whom is committed tl
of commencing and perfecting holiness in the hearts o

That God is the efficient cause of regeneration, is
taught in the text, and throughout the Bible, in the
forms of metaphor, direct testimony, and multiplied i
tions. Is moral pollution in the way,— "I will s
clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Is s
and insensibility the impediment to be removed,— '
take away the stony heart and give a heart of flesh."
condition of man represented by the battle-field, a ce
valley whitened with bones,— it is God who says un
bones, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you,
shall live." Is it the helplessness of infancy abandon

open field, with no eye to pity, or arm to save,—it is God who "passes by and bids us live." Is it darkness which impedes our salvation,—it is "God who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, who shines in our hearts." Is death the calamity,—a resurrection is the remedy: "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, and raised us up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ." Is it the annihilation of spiritual life,—regeneration is a new creation, "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works." Is it the old man who makes resistance to the claims of God,—the regenerated are said to be "born again, not of blood," that is, not by natural descent, "nor of the will of the flesh," the striving and efforts of sinners to save themselves, "nor of the will of man," the efforts of men to save their fellow-men, "but of God; WHOSOEVER LOVETH IS BORN OF GOD."

THE POWER OF GOD CONCERNED IN REGENERATION IS SUPERNATURAL. It is so,

(1.) As compared with the power of any created agent, man or angel.

(2.) IT IS SUPERNATURAL, as above the power of any law of nature, or natural efficacy of truth or motive, in the ordinary operation of cause and effect, natural or moral.

(3.) IT IS SUPERNATURAL, as distinguished from the stated operations of divine power, which are concerned in upholding all things, and guiding them in the stated order of cause and effect to their results, as earth and air, and rain and sunshine, produce vegetation, and cause harvests to wave in the field.

(4.) IT IS SUPERNATURAL, as being an interposition to ablish unfailingly a change in the will and affections of hich never takes place without it. And,

IT IS SUPERNATURAL, as it is an act of God's

ALMIGHTY POWER,— as really so as the creation of v
the resurrection of the dead.

The question has been started, whether God is
regenerate any more than he does. Unquestionabl
as sufficient power is concerned, he is able to su
things to himself. The limitation in respect to the
tion of redemption is not one of impotency, but a l
of the unerring wisdom and infinite benevolence of G
limitation of doing always and only, in the administ
grace, that which seemeth good in his sight, and is
best. The discriminations of his justice and grace a
tary. So far as his power is concerned, he is as
subdue the wills of rebels as to control the elements.
moral kingdom he is as truly THE LORD GOD OMN
working all things according to the counsel of his w
is in the government of the natural universe. He h
nothing which he has made beyond the reach of hi
and he has made nothing which he cannot and does
ern, according to the counsel of his own will. The
God in regeneration is represented as among the gre
plays of his omnipotence ever made, or to be mad
history of the universe. When this fair creation rose
beauty from the hand of God, the morning stars sang
and all the sons of God shouted for joy; but sweet
will celebrate and louder shouts attend the consum
redemption, by the power of God's Spirit; and such
glories of God, and higher illustrations of his power
manifested to principalities and powers by the Churc
cause the light of his glory in physical creation to g
be forgotten, as the stars fade and are lost amid the
of the sun. It is the united glory of God's power a
ness in redemption, and not the wonders of physic

which inspires and perpetuate forever around his throne the voice of praise, as the sound of many waters and mighty thunderings, to Him who loved us, and died for us, and washed us in his blood, and made us kings and priests unto God.

The effect of this divine interposition is instantaneous — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. It must be instantaneous, from the nature of the case. If man is an idolater, there must be a time when he gives the idol up for God; if an enemy, there must be a time when he becomes reconciled; if without holy love, there must be a time when it begins to warm the heart.

The graces of the Spirit admit not of a progressive creation; love or enmity, penitence or impenitence, faith or unbelief, are the only positive conditions of the human mind. There is no state between them. There is and can be no such thing as love, or repentance, or faith, half formed, and progressive to a completion.

There are persons, however, of some seriousness, who seem desirous to approximate to evangelical belief on the subject of regeneration, who admit the necessity of a change in human character in some degree like that which we have described, only it is not wholly new, but the result of the progressive culture of the human powers by divine aid; and since on both sides, we believe, they say, in the necessity of holiness, what difference does it make whether it comes from old principles or new, or whether the work is instantaneous or progressive?

Whatever might be thought beforehand, the difference in experience between a belief in instantaneous or progressive regeneration is manifest and great. The latter assumes fallacious and dangerous views of human nature, as including the seed of virtue, or principle of light and life, which needs cultivation to bring it up to the maturity of holiness; in

associated, also, with false views of holiness, as con
some nondescript, mystical goodness, which grows im
bly under culture, as the harvest rises under rain and

It legitimates as virtues, efficacious to save, a
grounds of fallacious hope which I have already r
quelling fear, preventing a sense of sin, and creat
built upon the sand.

It produces, likewise, and fosters, and makes c
a self-righteous and self-complacent, self-justifyin
while it creates hostility to the fundamental doctrin
Gospel,— the entire depravity of man, the necessity
ical change of character, and acquiescence in the
nations of divine justice and mercy, in the punisl
renovation and pardon of sinful men.

And, worst of all, its tendency on communities is
prejudice and virulent hostility, not only against the
of the Bible, but against revelation itself; and to
ultimately scepticism and rank infidelity, and scoffi
Bible and the work of the Spirit.

3. THE EFFECTUAL MEANS OF REGENERATION
WORD OF GOD. By effectual means, I understand tl
which God employs and renders efficient in produ
change. That he accomplishes the change by his
power associated with means, is the unequivocal testi
the Bible and the Confession of Faith. Chosen to
the elect of God are, through sanctification of the S
belief of the truth whereunto he called them *by the*
The Gospel is denominated "the power of God and
dom of God unto salvation." "The law of the Lor
fect, converting the soul." "The word of God is q
powerful." "The seed is the word." "Being bo
not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by th

God; and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth." "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." "They shall be taught of God." "I drew them with the cords of love." "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "Every one, therefore, which hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

This is only a small portion of the phraseology of the Bible which associates God's efficiency with his word, in regeneration. That such instrumentality should, in direct terms, and by every variety of metaphor, be associated with the power of God in regeneration, if in fact no such instrumentality is employed, cannot be assumed without shaking the foundation of all confidence in the teaching of the Bible. Exposition may as well be abandoned; for nothing, in that case, can be taught by language, which theory and imagination might not explain away. We might as well deny that God is the efficient cause, as that truth is the "effectual means" of regeneration. But there is no necessity for denying either, and no authority for stripping either class of texts of their natural and obvious import, to mean nothing. What would be thought of the expositor who should insist that because men are begotten again by the *word*, therefore the *power* of God is not concerned in regeneration, and that it is all a matter of moral suasion and human endeavor? But why should the efficiency of God defraud the word of its alleged instrumentality, or the instrumentality of the word exclude the power God? Is the union of both impossible? It cannot be possible, because, unquestionably, in the government of the tural world, God's almightiness is associated with the in-

strumentality of natural causes, and may be just as if God pleases, in the moral world, associated with tl mentality of moral causes.

To what purpose are laws, and institutions, and th ing of the Gospel, if God does nothing and can do n(their instrumentality? Are laws, and institutions, ministry of reconciliation, only the empty attendant of God's power? Does it correspond with the revealed language, to ascribe instrumentality to the signals and attendants of God's agency? Is it ever God inflicted the plagues of Egypt by Aaron's rod, down the walls of Jericho by rams' horns? The of scriptural use forbids the ascription of instrument: to the mere symbols of the presence and power of G(have I been able to find any declaration in the I God regenerates by his own almighty power, witl instrumental agency. The Scriptures teach abunds God is the author of regeneration, and that it is the neous effect of his omnipotence, applied with a dire(to produce it; but the fact that he does it, and that illustrious act of omnipotence, does not decide *how it*, much less that he does it by power only, withou while all the passages which speak of the instrume the word prove that he does not regenerate by om alone, but by power associated with the reading, and (the preaching, of the word.

With this view of the subject correspond all the tions of the Bible. If the Gospel possesses no ada secure in any way, as a means in the hand of God, vation of the heart, whence the transcendent excell importance attached to it, and the high pernicious *criminality of error*, and why is the almighty pow

manifest only in alliance with revelation? Is the truth of God a mere arbitrary association of particular opinions with particular acts of God's power? It cannot be. The testimony of the Bible is express the other way.

There is, however, in our Church, no need of controversy on the subject, and no room for it.

It is not claimed that God regenerates by the truth without an interposition of the exceeding greatness of his own power; and, without denying the Confession and Catechisms, it cannot be denied that what is accomplished in effectual calling is accomplished by his word and Spirit.

That God is able by his direct immediate power to approach the mind in every faculty, and to touch all the springs of action and affection, I have never denied or doubted. And that he is able by the direct interposition of his power so to rectify the mind of man, as disordered by the fall, as that the consequence would be the immediate, unperverted exercise of the will and affections in obedience, is just as evident as that God can create minds in such a condition that they will in these respects go right from the beginning; and that in this manner he does retrieve the consequences of the fall, in respect to those who die in infancy, would seem to be as evident as that he saves them at all. That he is able, also, if it seemed good in his sight, to reveal the truth and manifest himself savingly to the heathen, is as plain as that he could reveal the same truths to holy men of old, and make them effectual through a written word and established ordinances. Nor is it denied or doubted, in respect to POSSIBILITY, that God, if it seemed wisest and best under the Gospel, might make such manifestations of himself to the souls of men, attended by such energy of his almighty power, as would call them unfailingly into his kingdom.

The question, as we have said, is not a question of
or impossible, but a question of FACT, as to the ma
which God does actually call effectually sinners
kingdom,— a question of wisdom and goodness in do
is best in the best manner.

I have no sympathy for the opinion that it dep
sinners whether they be regenerated or not in the da
power, or that God does all he can, and leaves the
submission or not to rebel man,— and that sinner
themselves to differ, and are in fact the self-det
authors of their own regeneration. The passages q
prove such an assertion are misunderstood and perve

The texts,—"What could I have done more for r
yard that I have not done in it?" and "he could
many mighty works there, because of their unbeli
other kindred passages, do not teach that God is ev
ciously resisted by any sinner whom he attempts to
or that there is any sinner on earth so stubborn and
that God could not reconcile him if it seemed goo
sight. The limitation is of God's unerring wisdo
the "cannot" the same as when it is said he cann
himself, or cannot lie, or where God himself says, "
Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind c
be towards this people."

The question, also, has respect not to extreme c
to the ordinary methods of his sovereign power i
men; and here the Bible and Confession are exp
regeneration is accomplished by the word and S
God.

Most assuredly it is the grammatical import and
meaning, and no doubt the true intent of our Confes
Catechisms, that what God accomplishes in effect

he accomplishes by his word and Spirit,—effectually calls "*by his word and Spirit*" out of that state of sin and death in which men are by nature. *By his word and Spirit* enlightening their minds savingly to understand the things of God. *By his word and Spirit* taking away the heart of stone and giving a heart of flesh. *By his word and Spirit and almighty power* renewing their wills, and determining them to that which is good. *By his word and Spirit* inviting and drawing sinners to Christ, yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, and especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing of sin and converting sinners, and building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation." How can that be an effectual mean of conversion which does nothing, and only attends the display of God's omnipotence?

Is it demanded how God can make the word effectual by his Spirit in regeneration? I am not sure that the Bible, or the creeds, or standard writers, have explained exactly how the Spirit regenerates by the word, or that I shall be able to do justice to the representations which they have made. It is evident, however, that by "THE WORD" and "THE TRUTH" is meant the whole revelation which God has made to man: including all the truths, motives, and ordinances of the Bible, and all the illustrative and corroborating influence of his providential government; comprehending the being, the attributes, the character, and the eternal counsel and law of God, the fall and total depravity of man, the developments of the Trinity, and plan of redemption by Jesus Christ; including his divine person, mediation, atonement, and the [illegible] upon which justification and eternal life are offered, [illegible]e ordinances and means of commending these overtures

of mercy to the consciences and hearts of men; also the Spirit, his divine person, and work of r illumination and restraint, awakening and convinc verting and sanctifying sinful men, to make them heaven; and also the mingled influence of majesty descension, justice and mercy, and all the prom threatenings, and hopes and fears, attendant upon criminations of grace and justice, of death and and eternity, associated with heaven and hell, acc the characters formed, and the deeds done in the bo

Now, it is admitted by all orthodox creeds an that there is a work preparatory and consequential eration, which the Spirit does accomplish by the ins ality of the word. It is called before regeneration grace; and after, sanctification. Nor is it difficult t adaptation of the word to the requisite preparato The thing to be accomplished in regeneration is th tion of the vagrant will and affections from the cr the Creator,—the turning from broken cisterns to fountain of good. To accomplish this, the chara law of God need to be understood, the sinner's arrested, his sensibilities quickened, his conscienc rated, and his sins set in order before him by the c the commandment; and it is easy to see how th powerful in its adaptation after regeneration, to san fit believers for heaven. The Psalmist celebrat "right, rejoicing the heart,"—"pure, enlighte eyes;" and our Saviour, in his intercessory praye disciples and people in all ages, prays, "Sanct through thy truth,—thy word is truth."

The only question is, whether God, by his Spir *the word as effectual* to regenerate as he does to y

way, and to sanctify after regeneration. And is it a thing intuitively impossible that God, according to the language of our Confession and Catechisms, should be "pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call the predestinated by his word and Spirit out of a state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; by his word and Spirit enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Christ, yet so as they come freely, being made willing by his grace; in his accepted time, inviting and drawing them to Christ by his word and Spirit; — the Spirit of God making the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual mean of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation"? Our standards, you perceive, are unequivocal in the declaration that regeneration itself, as well as conviction and sanctification, is accomplished by the word and Spirit of God. It ascribes expressly the same instrumentality to the word, in regeneration, which it ascribes to it in conviction and sanctification. This, so far as I can judge, has been the prevalent doctrine of the Church of God in every age. Indeed, it was one of the points of earnest controversy between Papist and Protestant: the one mystifying about the internal word, as a pretext for the sequestration of the Bible, the other asserting its instrumentality. Should the question be pressed, how the Spirit makes the word effectual in regeneration, the answer is:

by the truth and motives of the word, as God employs
uses to produce their effects. It is said expressly

in our Confession that he does not force the will, (mine it to good by any absolute necessity of nature, he doth persuade and enable men to embrace Jes freely offered to them in the Gospel.

The mind is not a material substance, nor the mea unperverted action natural causes; and to clothe t in the hand of the Spirit, with the power of a natur from imagery borrowed from the natural worl materialize both the word and the soul. The hea literally a stone; nor the word of God a sword, o hammer, to break or melt the stony heart. The m that the Spirit somehow, by the word, both wou heals the soul; not as he would wound the body by and heal it by surgical application,— but he does instrumentality which may be fitly represented metaphorical analogies.

The Bible contains precisely that balanced exhit God,—of the riches of his goodness, his majesty anc descension, his love and his justice, his mercy and orable decision to punish the incorrigible, his long- and sudden vengeance,—and so exhibits the glorious a ful discriminations of his justice and his grace, as as perfect in its adaptation when brought home to and heart to induce submission, as the commandme commanded by the Spirit, is to produce convictio same exhibition made real by divine illumination t the believer; but sin has darkened the mind, and th this world, and the sinner's own deceitful heart o *keep out this exhibition* as a matter of living r that the natural man understandeth not, by his ow human endeavor, the things of the kingdom of God. *the Spirit* commends the law to the sinner's co

conviction of sin as man cannot, and sanctifies by the truth his regenerated people, so "all those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace." It is all dark to the sinner, and mournful and terrible, till the Spirit makes the Gospel a reality instinct with life.

Nor is it the *letter*, the simple naked *truth* as a mere matter of intellectual perception, which becomes effectual, even in the hand of God. Facts and propositions do not contain and exhibit the whole truth contained in the Bible. It is a depository of divine feeling, from which flows the copious tide of God's love and hatred, his compassion and his justice, his mercy and his wrath,—the meltings of his heart, the terrors of his power, and the energy of his will. All the reality of divine feeling is expressed in the Bible; but the natural man understandeth it not,—he reads the letter only which killeth. But it is the Spirit which giveth life, "the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life," manifesting the truth and reality of divine feeling to the soul. While the sinner reads with darkened mind the sacred page, the Spirit makes it luminous, and quick, and powerful,—it is as if written upon transparencies with invisible ink,—unseen and unfelt, till the illumination of the Spirit throws it out in letters of fire.

Then the heavens illuminated declare the glory and the inspired page shines with overpowering Both these united manifestations of the works and God are celebrated in the 19th Psalm :

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament s handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto nig knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun ; wl bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a stro run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and unto the ends of it : and there is nothing hid from the heat th law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul ; the testimony of sure, making wise the simple ; the statutes of the Lord are righ the heart ; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightenin

In accordance with these views of the proper instr ity of the word in regeneration, is the testimony of tine, as quoted by Knapp :

With respect to the manner in which saving grace operates believed that in the case of those who enjoy revelation, grace acts by means of the word, or the divine doctrine, but sometime because God is not confined to the use of means. On this poin great logomachy. — *Knapp's Theology*, vol. II. p. 457.

To the same purpose is the exposition by C Hebrews 4 : 12 : "For the word of God is quick, an ful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the j marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and inte heart."

It is to be observed that the apostle is here speaking of the w which is brought to us by the ministry of men. For these in are silly and even pernicious, to wit, that the internal word, inde *cious, but that the* word which proceeds from the mouth of ma

destitute of all effect. I confess, truly, that its efficacy does not proceed from the tongue of man, nor reside in the word itself, but that it is owing entirely to the Holy Spirit; nevertheless this is no objection to the idea that the Spirit puts forth his power in the preached word. For God, since he does not speak by himself, but by men, sedulously insists on this, lest his doctrine should be received contemptuously, because men are its ministers. Thus Paul, when he calls the Gospel the power of God (Rom. 1 : 16), purposely dignifies his preaching with this title, because he saw that it had been slandered by some and despised by others. Moreover, when he calls the word *living*, its relation to men is to be understood, as appears more clearly in the second epithet; for he shows what this life is, when he then calls it *efficacious;* for it is the design of the apostle to show what the use of the word is in respect to us.

The words rendered *living* and *efficacious* in the above paragraph are in the English version translated *quick* and *powerful.*

The following is the comment of Calvin on Romans 10 : 17: "So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

This is a remarkable passage concerning the efficacy of preaching, since it testifies that faith proceeds from it. He, indeed, confessed just before that it accomplished no good by itself; but where it pleases the Lord to work, this is the instrument of his power. God by the voice of man acts efficaciously, and by his ministry creates faith in us. In this manner that Papal phantasm of implicit faith, which separates faith from the word, falls to the ground.

The Synod of Dort is unequivocal also in the doctrine of effectual calling by the word and Spirit.

What, therefore, neither the light of nature nor the law could do, *that* God performs by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the word, or the ministry of reconciliation; which is the Gospel concerning the Messiah, by which it hath pleased God to save believers, as well under the Old as under New Testament. — *Scott's Synod of Dort*, p. 137.

in like manner, as by the fall man does not cease to be man, with intellect and will, neither hath sin, which has pervaded

the whole human race, taken away the nature of the human spe hath depraved and spiritually stained it; so even this divin regeneration does not act upon men like stocks and trees, nor the proprieties (or properties, *proprietates*) of his will, or violer it while unwilling; but it spiritually quickens (or vivifies), rects, and sweetly, and at the same time powerfully inclines i whereas before it was wholly governed by the rebellion and re the flesh, now prompt and sincere obedience of the Spirit ma reign. — *Ibid.* p. 141.

But in the same manner as the omnipotent operation of God, produces and supports our natural life, doth not exclude but *use of means*, by which God in his infinite wisdom and goodnes exercise this his power, so this fore-mentioned supernatural po by which he regenerates us in nowise excludes or sets aside the Gospel, which the most wise God hath ordained as the seed of re and the food of the soul. Wherefore, as the apostles, and tho who followed them, have piously instructed the people conc grace of God, in order to his glory and to the keeping down of in the mean time neither have they neglected (being admonis holy Gospel) to keep them under the exercise of the word, the s and discipline: so, then, be it far from us, that teachers or lear Church should presume to tempt God, by separating those th God, of his own good pleasure, would have most closely unite For grace is conferred through admonitions, and the more prom our duty, the more illustrious the benefit of God, who worket wont to be, and the most rightly doth his work proceed. To w all the glory, both of the means and their beneficial fruits and due for everlasting. Amen. — *Ibid.* p. 142.

WITSIUS, a standard writer in the Church, says:

Regeneration is that supernatural act of God whereby a new life is infused into the elect, — persons spiritually dead, — an the incorruptible seed of the word of God made fruitful by power of the Spirit.

WITHERSPOON, one of the best standard writer Church, and whose treatise on regeneration is the be and the most judicious, scriptural, copious, acc

experimental dissertation upon that subject in the English language, speaking of the nature of regeneration, says:

As, therefore, the change is properly of a moral or spiritual nature, it seems to me properly and directly to consist in these two things: 1. That our supreme and chief end be to serve and glorify God, and that every other aim be subordinate to this. 2. That the soul rest in God as its chief happiness, and habitually prefer his favor to every other enjoyment.—p. 137.

The following passages imply the associated influence of means:

The deplorable and naturally helpless state of sinners doth not hinder exhortations to them in Scripture, and, therefore, takes not away their obligation to duty. See an address, where the strongest metaphors are retained, the exhortation given in these very terms, and the foundation of the duty plainly pointed out. "Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." From which it is very plain that the moral inability under which sinners now lie, as a consequence of the fall, is not of such a nature as to take away the guilt of sin, the propriety of exhortations to duty, or the necessity of endeavors after recovery.

But what shall we say? Alas! the very subject we are now speaking of affords a new proof of the blindness, prejudice and obstinacy, of sinners. They are self-condemned, for they do not act the same part in similar cases. The affairs of the present life are not managed in so preposterous a manner. He that ploughs his ground and throws in his seed cannot so much as unite one grain to the clod; nay, he is not able to conceive how it is done. He cannot carry on, nay, he cannot so much as begin, one single step of this wonderful process toward the subsequent crop,—the mortification of the seed, the resurrection of the blade, and gradual increase, till it come to perfect maturity. Is it, therefore, reasonable that he should say, "I, for my part, can do nothing? It is, first and last, an effect of divine power and energy. And God can as easily raise a crop without sowing as with it,—in a single instant, and in any place, as in a long time, by the mutual influence of soil and season; I will therefore spare elf the hardship of toil and labor, and wait with patience, till I see he will be pleased to send." Would this be madness? Would it be

universally reputed so? And would it not be equal madness t
grace of God into licentiousness? Believe it, the warning is e
sonable and equally necessary in spiritual as in temporary th
134, 135.

The authority of Owen is among the best of
authorities. His language is as follows:

We grant that in the work of regeneration the Holy Spirit to
that are adult doth make use of the word, both the law and
and the ministry of the Church, in the dispensation of it, as t
means thereof; yea, this is ordinarily the whole external me
made use of in this work, and an efficacy proper unto it, it is a
withal.

The power which the Holy Ghost puts forth in our regenerati
in its acting or exercise, as our minds, wills and affections, are
wrought upon, and to be affected by it, according to their n
natural operations. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned
and I shall run after thee." He doth neither act in them an
than they themselves are meet to be moved and move, to be act
according to their own nature, power and ability. He draws us
cords of a man." And the work itself is expressed by persuadi
persuade Japhet;" and alluring—"I will allure her into the
and speak comfortably;"—for, as it is certainly effectual, so i
more repugnancy unto our faculties than a prevalent persuasion
that he doth not, in our regeneration, possess the mind with a
astical impressions, nor acteth absolutely upon us as he did in
nary prophetical inspirations of old, where the *minds and or*
bodies of men were merely passive instruments, moved by Him
own natural capacity and activity, not only as to the princip
ing, but as to the manner of operation.

He therefore offers no violence or compulsion unto the will.
faculty is not naturally capable to give admission unto. If it be
it is destroyed.--*Owen's Works*, vol. II. p. 371.

Howe is equally express on this subject. He say

And whereas, therefore, in this work there is a communi
participation of the divine nature, this is signified to be his

If you look to 2d Peter 2: 3, 4, compared, "According as his divine power hath given us all things appertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature." Here is a divine nature to be communicated and imparted in this great and glorious work. How is it to be communicated? It is true it must be by apt and suitable means,—to wit, by the great and precious promises given us in the Gospel. But it must be by the exertion, too, of a divine power. Though God do work suitably to an intelligent nature when he works upon such subjects, yet he works also suitably to himself, "according as his divine power hath given us all things pertaining to life and godliness," or to the godly life, in order to the ingenerating the godly life his divine power hath given us by the exceeding great and precious promises, a divine nature. The instrumentality and subserviency of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is greatly to be considered, God working herein suitably to the nature of an intelligent subject. Here is a change to be wrought in his nature—a nature that is corrupt, depraved, averse from God, alienated from the divine life; this nature is now to be attempered to God, made suitable to him, made propense and inclined towards him. This might be done, it is true, by an immediate exertion of almighty power, without any more ado. But God will work upon men suitably to the nature of man. And what course doth he therefore take? He gives "exceeding great and precious promises," and in them he declares his own good will, that he might win theirs. In order to the ingenerating grace in them, he reveals grace to them by these great and precious promises. And what is grace in us? Truly grace in us is good will towards God, or good nature towards God, which can never be without a transformation of our vicious, corrupt nature. It will never incline towards God, or be propense towards God, till he make it so by a transforming power. But how doth he make it so? By discovering his kindness and goodness to them in "exceeding great and precious promises," satisfying and persuading their hearts,—"I mean nothing but kindness towards you, why should you be unkind towards me? I am full of good will towards you; will you requite it with perpetual ill will and everlasting enmity towards me?" *Thus the "exceeding great and precious promises" are instruments to the communicating a divine nature to us, though that divine nature be ingenerated by a mighty power.* God doth work at the rate of omnipotency in the matter, by the exertion of almighty power, but yet suitably to our nature, so as to express his

mind, and kind design, and good will, by the exceeding great ar
promises contained in the Gospel.

And if it were not so, he might as well make use of any other
the Gospel to work upon souls by. But the Gospel is the w
grace.

There would seem to be the same evidence of inst
action of the word as employed by the Spirit, which
and evidences the direct efficacy of natural causes.
we learn the existence and power of natural causes?
not power itself, and infer it only from the uniforn
which the effect follows the application of the cause.
exists without it, and always attends its application.
same evidence of instrumental influence attends the
tion of the word of God. As a general fact, no spir
commences in its absence, and always in some form
ciation with its presence; and whatever may be the
ministers on the subject, they all pray at the close
sermons that God would make his word effectual,
with power, make it quick and powerful. The fire
hammer to break, and melt, and purify the heart.

Is the question still repeated, *How* does God n
word effectual in regeneration by his Spirit? That
belongs not to me, but to the Lord of the Bible;
been long since asked of him, and answered by him
demus saith unto him, "How can these things be?
the answer was, "The wind bloweth where it list
thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell w
cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is
the Spirit."

Does it seem to any to be impossible that God sho
ingly enlighten by his word and Spirit, and make "
ing, and especially the preaching of his word, an
mean of conviction and conversion"? It should

bered, that many things are possible with God, which seem impossible to men. That our philosophy is not the counsel of his will, according to which he worketh all things; nor our capacity of comprehension the limit of God's almighty power. Where the lamp of our reason goes out, and far beyond what eye hath seen or heart conceived, he holds on his eternal way in the great deep, and amid clouds and darkness, impenetrable to created mind. But in this unexplored and deep darkness, that he does a thing is the highest possible evidence of its rectitude, and that he has said a thing the highest possible evidence of its truth. On the ground, then, of divine declaration, we rest our confidence that God can make his word and Spirit an effectual means of the conviction and conversion of sinners.

4. WHY IS THE POWER OF GOD NECESSARY TO REGENERATION? Why may not argument and motive prevail on men to turn to God?

The power of God is not necessary because the will of man is forced, or by any absolute necessity of nature determined to evil. But it is necessary because the bias to actual sin occasioned by the fall is such as eventuates in a perverse decision of the will and affections in respect to the chief good, inducing the preference of the creature to the Creator; and because, when this perverse decision is once made, the heart is fully set and incorrigible to all motive, and immutable in its way,—to which is to be added, the power of habit resulting from the repetition of evil desire, and purpose, and gratification; and though altogether they force not the will, nor decide it wrong by an absolute necessity of nature, or cancel obligation, or afford excuse, they do, nevertheless, render all means and efforts abortive which are not made effectual by special influence of the Holy Spirit.

During this aberration of the will and affections fi there is nothing remaining to man which, by any culture, can become religion.

No emotions of the sublime, in view of the majest which become adoration: no admiration of the adap his character and laws to good results, or of the (sustain law and recover the lost, which produce holy cency: no delicacy of taste, or tenderness of sensibili will expand and amplify into love: no pleasure in d rather than evil, which, by culture, can be made ben embracing God with supreme and his subjects with good will: no patriotism which can be kindled in and none of the natural affections which unite in te the family, which become cords of love to draw heart from the creature to God: no amiableness nature, which inspire evangelical self-denial for Chri and no piety which so extends beyond the sphere of t as to feel for the sorrows of the soul, and the woes of no power of intellect or urgency of conscience, o punishment, as will ever in the order of cause and eff uate in godly sorrow; nor is there any power of in or of doctrine, or argument or eloquence, which ever e savingly the dark mind, or wakes up the pulse of l dead soul. As I have said in my sermon on t character of man, the discourse in which the chief e my Pelagianism is supposed to be contained,—"All admirable in intellect, or monitory in conscience, o hensive in knowledge, or refined in taste, or delicate bility, or powerful in natural affection, may be foun as the result of constitution, or the effect of intelle moral culture: but religion is not found, except as of a *special divine* interposition. The temple

but it is a temple in ruins; — the divinity is departed, and the fire on the altar is extinct."

It follows, therefore, that except a man be born again,— be born from above, be born of the Spirit, be born of God,— he cannot see the kingdom of God.

But I pass on to the next charge —

CHARGE III. — OF PROPAGATING A DOCTRINE OF PERFECTION, &c. (Vide page 88).

On this subject it will not be necessary to go into any extended analysis. The subject in discussion is that of evangelical obedience, and the ability of the sinner to render it. I do teach that a sinner is *able* to render such obedience as the Gospel requires, and that so far as God renders him *willing* he is perfect. But my sermon nowhere teaches that God does actually render him willing to keep all his commandments. I know that to effect this nothing is needful but that the sinner should be willing; and where once he is so, all obstacle is removed. If my language in the sermon does convey the idea that a sinner is ever so rendered willing that he keeps the entire will of God, I conveyed that which I did not mean. And Dr. Wilson knows that this is and must be so; for he has himself admitted that he does not believe that I hold the doctrine of the Perfectionists. But what do I say?

Indeed, to be able and unwilling to obey God, is the only possible way in which a free agent can become deserving of condemnation and punishment. So long as he is able and willing to obey, there can be no sin; and the moment the ability of obedience ceases, the commission of sin becomes impossible. — p. 22.

What, then, when he moves on to that work of sovereign mercy which no sinner ever resisted, and without which no one ever submitted to God, does he do? When he pours the daylight of omniscience upon the comes to search out what is amiss, and put in order that which he way, what impediment to obedience does he find to be removed,

and what work does he perform? He finds only the will per obstinately persisting in its wicked choice; and in the day of all he accomplishes is to make the sinner willing. —p. 31.

Both passages respect willingness to obey the Go have no reference to a perfect obedience of the moral

What, then, is the evidence that I propagate a do Perfection? 1. That I teach the doctrine of man' ability as a free agent to obey the Gospel. 2. T doctrine tends to the doctrine of Perfection. 3. ' Perfectionists claim Dr. Beecher as being on their That some young man somewhere has written a Theodore Weld with a view to convert him to Perfe 5. That I have warned the students against the do Perfection.

Dr. Wilson *knows* that this is no evidence. But asserts that some of the students in Lane Seminary h notions, and were Perfectionists in principle. Suppo were,—does that prove that *I taught* the doctrine ' was a Hopkinsian student in Dr. Mason's Seminary York,—does that prove that Dr. Mason was a Hop But there is one fact, which has been proved on the and into which Dr. Wilson ought to have inquired l ventured to ring the bell of alarm, and that is, that t not *one* Perfectionist in the seminary. Prof. B several of the students have been examined before they expressly say that they do not know of a sing man in that institution who holds the Perfectionist and all these, and especially my warning the student the doctrine, are brought to prove that I propagate i

Dr. Wilson says that ability and obligation, when together, imply absolute perfection. And so say *fectionists*. But Dr. Wilson does himself great inj

says that there is no man but must be perfect, if he has the power of being so. That proposition assumes that every free agent does all that he is able to do; so that, if you show that he is able to keep God's commandments, it proves that he *does* keep them.

I have proved that man is able to obey the commandments of God, whether in the Gospel or the law. But Dr. Wilson says, if so, then I hold that man is perfect; because no free agent has ability, unless he does all that he is commanded to do.

[Dr. WILSON said that Dr. Beecher had admitted that so long as a man is both able and willing there can be no sin. Did he mean to refute his own argument?]

Dr. BEECHER replied by asking whether all men who were able to pay their honest debts do always pay them? and whether, if a man did not pay his debts, it follows that of course he was not able? Did a miser give always according to his ability? or is not a liar able to speak the truth? Dr. Beecher said he was amazed at the argument of the Perfectionists, and still more that his brother Wilson should have classed himself with them.

But, said Dr. Beecher, another argument brought against me is that the heresies I have taught lead to the doctrine of Perfection, as their natural result. Dr. Wilson has conceded that he himself never supposed I meant to teach Perfection. But he affirms that I teach that from which others draw the doctrine of Perfection as an inference. Now, admitting the fact that they do draw such an inference, the question is whether they draw it logically,—whether my premises lead to any such conclusion? And I have proved that they do not.

Dr. Wilson affirm that a man holds and teaches whatever men draw as inferences from his language?

There were ignorant and unlearned men who perver the language of Paul. If a man's doctrine is to be the use which heretical persons make of it, then Dr himself is most certainly a heretic. For did not the claim him? and did not the New Lights claim him did; and insisted that, in maintaining their syster were only carrying out the principles which Dr. Wi laid down. Such a ground of charge will not do sword which cuts both ways.

Again, I am charged with preaching the doc regeneration as accomplished by the truth. On a t this much might be said. I shall, however, content with saying but little. I have no theory to proc descant upon; but shall refer simply to the Catec to the Bible. What says the Shorter Catechism?

Q. 89. How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting si of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, vation.

And what says the Larger Catechism?

Q. 155. How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the of the Word, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing and sinners; of driving them out of themselves and drawing them u of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to hi strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; of bui up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfo faith unto salvation.

And what says the Confession?

All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to c *word and Spirit, out of* that state of sin and death in which *nature, to grace* and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening

spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace. — Ch. x. sec. 1.

And now I beg leave to submit such quotations from the Bible as shall present the views that I entertain on this subject.

See Rom. 8: 30; 11: 10. Eph. 1: 10, 11. 2 Thess. 2: 13, 14. 2 Cor. 3: 3, 6. Rom. 8: 2. Eph. 2: 1—5. 2 Tim. 1: 9, 10. Acts 26: 18. 1 Cor. 2: 10, 12. Eph. 1: 17, 18. Ezek. 36: 26; 11: 19. Phil. 2: 13. Deut. 30: 6. Ezek. 36: 27. Eph. 1: 19. John 6: 44, 45. Cant. 1: 4. Psa. 110: 3. John 6: 37. Rom. 6: 16, 17, 18.

The whole matter turns upon this,— a thing which is done by instrumental agency cannot at the same time be done by direct agency, because it involves a contradiction. Now, our book says that regeneration is accomplished by the instrumentality of the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ; and the Bible declares that men are begotten by the incorruptible seed of the Word; and Paul declares that it is by the cross of Christ that he is crucified to the world. The Catechism and the Bible, therefore, both say that the saving change in man is accomplished by instrumentality; and the charge against me implies that this is untrue. We both admit that it is God who converts; but I say he converts men through his Word of truth, and Dr. Wilson says that he converts them by a direct agency, without any intervening instrumentality whatever. On account of this difference between us, he charges me with heresy. My answer is, to the law and to the testimony.

And, first, the subject does not require in its own nature intervention of God's naked omnipotency. This, indeed, *d be* required, if an operation was to be performed in the

natural world. Matter can be moved in no other way as the effect is a moral one, being none other than a of an enemy into a friend, what is the instrument which it is to be effected? Must not that be mor Why did Christ die? Why was his atoning blood the hand of the Spirit to be thrown by him upon hard man, that he may be subdued to love and obedience these the means which God employs when he works a in things material and natural? What should God to move a free agent, but the motives so abundantly c in his own Word?

The charge assumes that he works this change means of any kind. Now, I don't philosophize al matter. Let them who do tell us how enemies ar ciled. It is not for me to say how God does this worl for God alone to tell. God says he does it by the and the Catechism says he makes the Word an means of doing it; and if the Word has done it, been effectual in doing it, then it is not done witl Word by direct power. If a thing cannot be done different ways at the same time, and it is known fr evidence that it is done in one way, then we know t not done in the other way. A tree cannot be cut do an axe, and at the same time pushed down by the strength of a man's hand. If he pushes it down, he cut it down; if he cuts it down, he does not push And as God has said that he makes the preachin Gospel EFFECTUAL, no man may set aside God's testi order to introduce his own philosophy. This is my it is not new divinity; and if it is heresy, I shall car of the Church with me,—and yet I hope that I shal *in the Church too.*

IV. Another charge which I am to answer is that of having slandered the whole Church of God.—(p. 89.)

I charge Dr. Beecher with the sin of slander, namely:

Specification 1.—In belying the whole church of God.

The Doctor's statements are these: "There is no position which unites more universally and entirely the suffrages of the whole human race than the necessity of a capacity for obedience to the existence of obligation and desert of punishment." Again: "The doctrine of *man's free agency* and natural ability, as the ground of obligation and guilt, has been the received doctrine of the Orthodox Church in all ages."—Sermon "Dependence and Free Agency," pp. 23 and 36.

Specification 2.—In attempting to bring odium upon all who sincerely receive the standards of the Presbyterian Church, and to cast all the Reformers, previous to the time of Edwards, into the shade of ignorance and contempt.

Dr. Beecher says: "Doubtless the impression often made by their language (language of the Reformers) has been that of natural impotency; and in modern days there may be those who have not understood the language of the Reformers, or of the Bible, on this subject; and who verily believe that *both* teach that man has no ability, of any kind or degree, to do anything that is spiritually good, and that the rights of God to command and to punish survive the wreck and extinction in his subjects of the elements of accountability. Of such, if there be such in the church, we have only to say, than when, for the time, they ought to be teachers, they have need that some one should teach them which be the first principles of the oracles of God."—Sermon "Dependence and Free Agency," p. 41. Again:

"It must be admitted, however, that from the primitive age down to the time of Edwards, few saw this subject with clearness, or traced it with uniform precision and consistency. His appears to have been the mind that first rose above the mists which long hung over the subject."—p. 41. Again:

"So far as the Calvinistic system, as expounded by Edwards and the disciples of his school, prevailed, revivals prevailed, and heresy was kept back. And most notoriously it was 'dead orthodoxy' which opened the dikes, and let in the flood 'of Arminian and Unitarian heresy.'" By attending to the whole passage, page 48, same sermon, the Presbytery will [illegible]t "dead orthodoxy," as the Doctor calls it, was the doctrine of

man's natural impotency to obey the Gospel. — p. 48. The Doct
to make us believe that, from the time of Edwards, the the
sermon has been, and now is, the received doctrine of the mi
churches of New England. The truth of this I am not prepare
bad as I think of the New England theologians in general; bu
prepared to deny it. Be it so, — the matter is so much the wor
the Doctor proceeds, in his strain of calumny, — "Far the gre
of the revivals of our land, it is well known, have come to pas
auspices of Calvinism, as modified by Edwards and the disci
school, and under the inculcation of ability and obligation,
exhortations of immediate repentance and submission to God;
gregations and regions over which natural impotency and d
and the impenitent use of means, and waiting God's time, hav
their tendencies, have remained, like Egypt, dark beside t
Goshen; and like the mountain of Gilboa, on which there was n
fields of offering; and like the valley of vision, dead, dry, ve
p. 49.

And, to complete the climax, the Doctor adds: "No other ob
the success of the Gospel is so great, as the possession of the p
by the belief of the natural and absolute inability of unconverte
has done more, I verily believe, to wrap in sackcloth the Sun of
ness, and perpetuate the shadow of death on those who might
rejoicing in his light, than all errors beside. I cannot anticipat
calamity to the church than would follow its universal incul
adoption. And most blessed and glorious, I am confident,
result, when her ministry everywhere shall rightly understand
and their hearers shall universally admit, the *full ability* of e
to comply with the terms of salvation." — p. 52.

Let the Presbytery compare all this with the history of the C
the doctrine of our standards on original sin, total depravity,
of the fall, regeneration, and effectual calling, and say whether
Arminian, or a Pelagian, or a Unitarian, in the land, who wil
with Dr. Beecher, and admit "the full ability of every sinner
with the terms of salvation," and unite with him in consi
calamity for the doctrines of our standards to be universally ad

But I rather think that such slander as this is n
able. Men are usually prosecuted for slandering one
for speaking falsely of men above ground, not belo

and the whole Church of God is not a living agent to be the object of slander. All that I have done is to state historical facts, according to my knowledge of history. And if in so doing I have ever fallen into error, it is not slander. If I have misread the documents left to us by the fathers, it is a mistake, but it is not slander. But I have proved the truth of my allegations with respect to the Church. I have shown that she holds, and has held in all ages, that man is a free agent, but lies in a condition of moral impotency; and I say that this is no slander on the Church, but the reverse. It is not to her discredit, but to her honor, that she believes the truth. If I had said that the Church held the doctrine of Fatalism, and had failed to prove it, that would have been a slander indeed. And now I ask whether Dr. Wilson's charity could not by any ingenuity have found out a more favorable construction to put upon my course? And even admitting that I had fallen into a mistake in stating what I believe to be true, could he not have found for my error a more brotherly name?

I have not slandered, then, the Church of God, in teaching that they held to the doctrine of man's natural ability as the foundation of his accountable agency, but have proved the truth of it, from Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, to Dr. Wilson's friend, Dr. Matthews, by an unbroken chain of historical extracts; while Dr. Wilson, by denying this, and assuming that they taught, as the doctrine of the Bible, that it requires no ability of any kind in fallen man to make him an accountable agent, and a subject of God's moral government, has deeply slandered them.

While on this subject of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, he will seem to multitudes to have equally slan-

dered them by his following statements in this Presbytery. Dr. Wilson said:

Let us guard here against some mistakes. The doctrine of a union of representation does not involve in it the idea of personal identity. It does not mean that Adam and his posterity are the same identical persons. It does not mean that this act was personally and properly their act. Nor does it mean that the moral turpitude of Adam's sin was transferred to his descendants. The transfer of moral character makes no part of the doctrine of imputation.

DR. WILSON'S SOLE REMAINING CHARGE AGAINST ME IS THAT OF HYPOCRISY. The occasion of his preferring this was the refusal of Presbytery to institute an inquiry into the sentiments I held, on the ground of common fame. Being dissatisfied with that decision, he appealed to the Synod; in which court I defended the course the Presbytery had pursued, denied the existence of that common fame which had been alleged to exist and to furnish ground of process against me, and openly avowed my faith in the Confession. It is in this avowal I am said to have acted hypocritically. The doctrines I held were as well known then as they are now; and when I spoke of the Confession's containing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, my words are to be interpreted by the subject on which I was speaking, and are not to be taken out of the record and made to apply to something else which I was not talking about. The entire system of doctrine contained in the Confession was not the matter in dispute. The discussion had reference only to a few points of doctrine, concerning which I was charged with holding error. It is an irrefragable law of interpretation, that words spoken are to be understood in reference only to the matter concerning which they were uttered. Now, it was in reference to these particular doctrines that I said there had been a time when I could not

fully accord with the language of the Confession; but that since I had attended more fully to the subject, and had acquired more knowledge of the meaning of the terms employed as technics at the time the Confession was adopted,—terms now obsolete, but then well understood,—I had become convinced that instrument did contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I had no such thought as applying this language, rigidly, to the whole Confession, and every particular it contained; but I meant the remark in reference to the doctrines concerning which it was said my soundness was suspected; and they are doctrines of vital importance. With respect to these, I once more repeat the declaration, our Confession teaches the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If, indeed, some of its terms are taken in the meaning often attached to them at this day, it speaks error; but, receiving its language in the sense in which it is alleged the framers intended, it speaks the very truth.

Nor did I say this for the sake of making a flourish, and producing popular effect; and had the intercourse between myself and my brother Wilson been such as I am sorry to think it has not been,—had he felt the warm beatings of my heart, while he opened his own to me in return,—he would not have suspected me of such a manœuvre. It has never belonged to my character, either here or anywhere else, to conceal my feelings and mask my sentiments. I always go heart first. But Brother Wilson seems to think that I go head first, and sometimes rather recklessly.

But suppose there is, on close examination, some discrepancy between my faith and the Confession,—does it necessarily follow that I see and hide it? That I have secret meanings, ich I keep back from the public view? Is there no such possible as a mistake? And if a man thinks he agrees,

when he really differs, must he be a hypocrite? never make mistakes who are admitted to be hones is it not within the range of possibility that the thin I hold to be in the Confession actually are in it; a is others who differ from it, and not I? Before D can establish this charge, he must prove two thin what I said; and, secondly, that I was not, and c be, honest in saying it. Has he proved them? Can them? He has not proved them; but he has publi the charge; and I cannot but consider his course in ter as unkind, unbrotherly and invidious. Christia hopeth all things, and believeth all things; and it n admit the existence of sin in a brother, and especiall odious as that of hypocrisy, till the proof is strong.

I have attempted to show that the Confession teacl natural ability as a free agent, and his moral inab fallen and lost sinner; that, on the subjects of orig including federal representation, the covenant with A his posterity, the imputation of sin, the guilt of it, ishment, and the original bias of our nature and wil taught nothing against the Confession of Faith. contrary, all that I have written and avowed on th jects is in strict accordance with the Confession, views of the standard writers in the Church, and Bible. I have shown that my views of regeneratio special influence of the Spirit, and the instrumentality are expressed fully by the Larger and Shorter Ca and by the article concerning effectual calling in th sion. I do not deny, but admit, the interpositic direct power of God, so far as it respects the bodily ural powers of man, so far as these are calculated his emancipation from sin. Whatever impediment

from bodily habit or constitution, may be, and no doubt is, operated upon directly; and in these respects I never denied or disbelieved that an exertion of God's natural power, so far as it respects natural things, may be concerned in the work of man's regeneration. This I have always believed.

One more topic remains, to which I must solicit the attention of the Presbytery. Supposing that, in the explanations I have made, I shall not have succeeded in convincing all my brethren of my entire agreement with the Confession and the Bible as they understand both, still the discrepancy is not such as is inconsistent with the ends of Church fellowship, and an honest subscription to the Confession.

1. Similar differences have existed from the beginning. My position is this,—that a hair's breadth coincidence in each particular point never was made, or understood or intended to be made, a prerequisite condition of adopting the Confession. Nor has it ever been so in practice. The court has only to decide on one thing,—whether my differences, if I do differ, are such as to vacate the system, to put a sword into its vitals. If they are, then I ought to be put out of the Church forthwith. But, if they leave the system heart-whole, with all its great organization complete and untouched, and there is only a philosophical difference with respect to some of its parts, then I say, such differences have ever existed in the Church, and subscription to the Confession has never been understood as implying the contrary.

2. Differences have been so great that they did, at one time, produce a temporary separation between the Synods of New York and Philadelphia. These Synods were divided on what were then called new measures and new divinity, and in the heat of strife they remained apart for nine years; yet, without any change of opinion, or any relinquishment

of their respective peculiarities, they came togeth
wept over all their divisions and alienations, and un
unbrotherly feelings towards each other, and adc
Confession of Faith, with a declaration that a subsc
it implied no more than this,—that the subscriber b
to contain the system of truth taught in the word of
ask, Did these Synods come together on the ground
Confession contained the truth of God in the sense
each understood it? Did they mean by mutual sul
to imply that there was an exact agreement as to th
in all things? Far from it. They came together wi
religious views and feelings; they had found, by sa
ence, that where contention is there is every evil w
they mutually agreed to bury the hatchet, and walk
under that compromise which alone had first n
Church, and under which she had grown up in the e
of unparalleled prosperity, and the brightest smiles of
And at this day the question is, whether a controver
sundered the Church for nine years, and all who
were wormwood and gall, shall be renewed, by mak
agreement in all things essential to the adoption of
mon symbol; and whether those volcanic fires wh
once rent the bosom of the Church shall now br
anew, and burn with redoubled fury, desolating in
tions all that is good and fair?

That there have always existed diversities of s
which, if pressed and insisted on, might have
ground of separation, I can show from various sourc

Three of the Presidents of Princeton College,
Edwards, Witherspoon and Davies, held to the doctri
new school on the subject of man's natural ability.
is admitted, were some of the most illustrious men

Church has ever been favored to possess; and yet they held that very point for which I am now to be turned out of the Church. I might add to the number the name of Samuel Stanhope Smith, for he agreed with them in this opinion. But I am not now in possession of the documentary proof necessary to establish this fact. Were these men charged with heresy? On the contrary, they are to this day eulogized in the highest strains by the very men who are now the champions of Orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church. What man has more exactly or more fully stated the doctrines I hold on the subject of natural ability than Dr. Witherspoon, and yet who has been more extolled by Dr. Greene?

When Mr. Barnes was tried, Dr. Spring declared that he was ready to sink or swim with him; and yet, after that declaration, Dr. Spring has been sent by the voice of the General Assembly as their public and honored representative to the Churches of Europe. What, then, is the matter which makes that so bad in one man that he must be excommunicated, while it is so innocent in another that he may go all over the world, representing the Presbyterian Church of the United States? All that I hold is the old approved New England divinity,— it is that, and nothing else. And all the attempts which have been made to identify me with the New Haven school, as that is represented, are slander. There is nothing new in my creed; I learned it under Dr. Dwight; and my preaching is as sound as was the preaching of that illustrious man. If there is anything new in the school which has been named after Dr. Taylor, it has not *originated* or *changed* the faith I hold. I stand for myself, and for the Confession of Faith, and for the Bible; and all attempts to get a fog around another man, and then say that I believe the same as he does, are slanders. I protest against this

representative heresy; this plan of dressing somel
with bear-skins, until you have made him an objec
and horror, and then to cry out, "Dr. Beecher be
he does." O! but Dr. Taylor is my friend, and
firms it. Alas! is every man a heretic because his
unhappily falsely accused of heresy? I confess, with
tation, that I don't believe Dr. Taylor is worthy of
tical disfranchisement. He would be, if he believed
represent him to believe; but that is quite a differ
I have always refused to permit Dr. Taylor's opi
those of any other man, to be the representatives
but I have as uniformly declared my disbelief of
soundness in the faith, and have refused to joi
of heresy and denunciation. I hold the peculiar doc
the New England divinity, as they were taught fi
ago, and respecting which Dr. Greene said that he h
jection to them, that he could get along with them v
Nor was this the opinion of Dr. Greene alone. The
Assembly must have been of the same mind, for
down a plan of union and fellowship between the Pre
Church and the Churches of New England, and f
time their delegates voted in each other's courts; a
very hour you give these men the right hand of fe
Will it be said that their doctrines were not known
doctrines were published to the whole world, and wer
known then as they are now; and it was with a full k
of these doctrines that those Churches were admitted
spondence. Can there be a stronger proof that the se
of the New England divines were not considered her

I stand sheltered, therefore, by deliberate and
decisions of the whole Presbyterian Church. I
remember the commencement of that arrangeme

younger Edwards, President of Union College, was at the head of the committee who reported a plan to the General Assembly, according to which ruling-elders and committee-men were allowed to sit side by side in the General Assembly itself. The object of the arrangement was the accommodation and comfort of that flood of emigrant piety which came pouring from New England, and settling down in the midst of Presbyterians, in all our new settlements. The distinction, which kept brother from brother, on account of a mere difference in ecclesiastical connections, weakened both, and impaired and often prevented their ability to support the Gospel among them. Remove the separating partition, allow them to unite, and they would both become strong. When the Presbyterian Church received these strangers into a union with herself, she perfectly well knew the materials she took, and what notions they held; and it is too late at this time of day to turn about and kick those out of the Church who had been received into it on a mutual agreement, when no change has taken place in their religious belief, and no stain is alleged against their moral character. Brethren may say, it was very wrong that they were admitted; it was a thing that ought never to have been done. Very well, you have a right to your own opinion on that question. But it *was* done; and now you must restrain your impatience, until it shall regularly and in an orderly manner be undone. But you are not to enact *ex post facto* laws, and hang men who came into your Church in obedience to laws then existing. Give us fair warning; take back your recognition; let us out unharmed, with as fair a character as we came in; and then, if any of us shall put his head in, catch him if you can. We now in, and we came in on your own invitation. Now, the Church of God invite heretics into her bosom, and

admit them to vote in her courts? Does she hold mi
fellowship with heretics? Does she place heretical
tee-men on the same bench with her own orthodox eld
won't do. It is going too far. The Church has decla
what I hold is not heresy; and she has made the decla
various ways, and in almost every possible form. F
last Assembly refused to dissolve the existing allia
only recommended that no more Churches be formed
plan. But here is Dr. Wilson's own letter. When
it, he knew that I had held this doctrine, and he had
dence that I had ever denounced it. And here is Dr.
letter, who knew my sentiments perfectly, and, neve
urged me vehemently to come to Philadelphia, to be a
pillar there, and, according to his own flattering rep
tions, to exert a tranquillizing influence amid all th
tentions, endeavoring to make me believe that I was t
of all others, best calculated to accomplish that gre
Does Dr. Miller not know what is heresy? Would
suade me to come and put my hand to the Confession
against a good conscience? Never. I have, therefo
possible proof that in embracing the Confession I ha
that which the Church and the luminaries of the
thought consistent with a godly sincerity.

As to Dr. Wilson, he had evidence of my heres
back as 1817. He had all that time to ponder upo
yet he united in calling me; and when I came at
met me with a back stroke. Now, if the Church is c
of her error, and chooses to tighten her cords, and to
from her communion all who hold the original doct
the New England divines, free from all alleged adn
she certainly has a right to do it. She may, if she
turn out all her New England children, after

done so much to build her walls, and extend her influence and power. But she has no right to make that a crime which she has herself legitimatized, and invited us to do, and never turned out any for doing. I will now draw my plea toward a close with some miscellaneous remarks.

This Western world is a great world; and it needs great influences to bring it out from the state of chaos which has grown from the mixed character of its population. It exhibits to the eye of the philosopher and the Christian an entirely new spectacle. Never till now was the scriptural prediction so near to a literal fulfilment, that a nation should be born in a day.

It is destined, and that very soon, to be the greatest of the nations; and its chief glory is, that God has established in it the principles of his truth, and seems to have selected it as a theatre on which to display their happiest effects. Nor is there any society of men whom God has favored and honored with opportunity to accomplish a greater work than the Presbyterian Church in these United States. This may be said with sober truth, and without any invidious comparison. And whatsoever she is able to do is most imperiously needed. The interests of this whole West, the interests of our nation and of the world, the interests of liberty and of religion, demand it at her hands. If the Presbyterian Church shall preserve harmony within her borders, if her ministers shall proceed on the ground of bearing and forbearing, there are no limits to the power which this, our beautiful and blessed Church, shall be able to send forth, to give strength and glory to the land. But, if she shall divide, woe 's the day! — it may be [illegible]e that day described in the Revelations, when those who [illegible] been enriched by her merchandise shall stand at a dis- [illegible] and, beholding her burnings, cry out, Alas! alas! that

in one day so great riches should come to desolatio
to it! Brethren, a little precaution, a little kindnes
of that charity which restored the two Synods to eac
fellowship, thereby laying the foundation for the Pre
Church, will carry us safely over this exigency, a
us a great and undivided people, terrible to God's ad
as an army with banners.

But, should you choose an opposite course, to-mor
may not have gone down before you may have cu
the cords of our unity and strength, and broken ou
up into fragments.

Mind is a difficult thing to associate with mind; a
you have got them together, it is a difficult and a deli
to keep the union unbroken; it is like broken bon
are commencing to reünite,— one unguarded touch
moment, sunder them again; and that the Devil kn
well. Yet it is comparatively easy to keep men
who, by long habit, have been accustomed to march
to shoulder. It is easy, in comparison, to keep on
the stream of grace and the breathings of the Spiri
an evil hour let the bonds of her unity be sundered,
bring the Church together again if you can. Reme
she contains elements of strife such as were nev
gathered together for the production of evil. Con
there are within these United States notions and
which lead to nullification. Let that spirit once ge
Church, and let it cut off one great section of our co
do you suppose the residue will long hold togetl
indeed, we were only to be separated into two parts
and then could respectively abide in peace and quiet
memberment might not be an event so deeply to be
nay, it would, perhaps, be advantageous, that the t

of the Church, between whom some unpleasant bickerings have taken place, should, like Abraham and Lot, agree to part their flocks, to preserve the general peace. But, alas! it will not be so. Our Churches are all on the Presbyterial foundation. The heretical parties mutually denounced have it not in their power to say to each other, If you will go to the right, then we will go to the left; or, if you prefer the left, then we will depart to the right. They are chained to the soil, and must continue to mingle together. We shall preach, and you will preach. One will claim the Church, and the other will claim the Church. The contention will grow sharper and sharper, the love of property mingling now in the strife, till there will be lawsuits in all directions. And then where will our hearts be? Where will be the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit? Where will be the work of missions? Where will be our societies for education? Where will be the rising institutions of the West, when all our strength, and all our property, and all our influence and power, have been wasted in mutual litigations and mutual revilings? The devil will utter a scream of joy at a spectacle so worthy of his most earnest aspirations. He had begun to think that he must take leave of the West, that he must abandon his long-cherished hope of getting ultimate possession of this great and wide and fertile valley. But the news of the Sacramental Host of God's own people falling out and fighting with each other will heal his deadly wound, and bid all his hopes revive. No, brethren; the Presbyterian Church cannot divide, without delaying the hour of her victory for more than half a century. If we witness that lamentable day, we must live and die in the midst of contentions; and then, when we have sunk amidst the ruins of Christian char-

ity and the desolation of all our best hopes, our chil
come up and finish the bad work which we have beg

I have a word to address to you that respects my
the Confession of Faith and discipline of the Pre
Church. It was asked, in a letter read by Dr. Wi
it was that got up a new Confession of Faith in N
land? I cannot answer the question. But I can
put down that attempt. The scheme was got up, I
in Connecticut, and it was brought by the editc
Evangelist before the General Association of Massa
and I was the man who made successful opposition
that Association. I never lifted a hand to revise or
the Confession of Faith; and I never shall do so, wh
the doctrines of natural ability as true, and whil
found them useful in doing away the notions of fa
Antinomianism. I have never preached them, exc
particular and definite purpose; just as a physic
calomel to a patient in a fever, and when the fever
then administers bark and tonics. I have not gone o
ing my own views blindfold. But when I thoug
preached the doctrine of natural ability long enoug
out the opposite errors, then I have brought up the
of moral dependence. And I challenge any one t
Arminian in sentiment in any of those Churches to
has been my privilege to minister. It is impossible
either the doctrine of free agency or dependence, pro
for any length of time, and not have some men run
one or the other into error. Dr. Wilson, for instance
the doctrine of dependence, and there are some who
he is a fatalist; and, if I am not misinformed, there
of his hearers who push his system into absolute A
ism. Is Dr. Wilson to blame for this? Not at

indeed, he omits to preach the doctrines which look the other way. Both are true, and both must be preached; and if one only is held up to view, the public mind will infallibly get a wrong impression. The proportion in which the two branches of the system are to be dwelt upon must depend upon circumstances. If a man goes where Antinomianism is prevalent, he must preach the doctrine of natural ability and free agency; on the contrary, if he is called to labor where Arminianism is rife, he must preach the doctrine of moral dependence. Let a man advocate whichever side of the controversy he chooses, and let him do it ever so judiciously and wisely, there will always be novices in the Church who will run his sentiments into extremes, and will be guilty of much extravagance.

I suppose that my opinions, when rightly understood, are very nearly the same as those of Dr. Wilson. Does he suppose that I am not sensible of the danger that must arise from carrying them to extremes? I am not insensible to it. I am as aware of danger as he can be. There will always be men who are incapable of discrimination; men half educated, full of zeal, but destitute of knowledge and prudence. Luther was vexed almost to death with such, and so am I, and so is Dr. Wilson. We should unite; we are united. While I preach natural ability, I do and always will preach moral dependence; and if I find any among my people who carry the doctrine to an extreme, I put the sword of the Spirit upon them. And if others carry matters to an extreme on the opposite side, then I turn about and fight them too. That is the stand which every minister is called to take. He is placed upon his watch-tower, that he may guard against the approach of danger alike in every direction. I am not so

the influence of a theory as to make everything yield

to that. My people know that I am not alwaye
their ears with the doctrine of natural ability. I
the two edges of the sword, and smite as to me see
that I may guard my people on either side, and tı
up to become perfect men in Christ Jesus. I thin
some parts of the Church enough has been said oı
trine of natural ability. I thought so in Boston, a
fore I ceased from pressing those particular vie
Woods said that I had rightly understood the ty
disease. I had done with the calomel, and it was
the bark. I am aware that Asa Rand has said
change was induced by other considerations. Bu
takes my motives. I hold that we are not to tak
apothecary's shop of medicine and throw it upon
ple at once, but that we are to administer it judi
measure, according to the state of the pulse. A
comes in, in the second stage of the disease, and
physician administering tonics, and goes away and
great outcry, and calls the doctor a quack, because
isters bark in a fever. He runs round among his
ance, and very sagely predicts that the patient wil
goes from house to house, and stirs up an excitemen
may get the ignorant quack drummed out of tow
after all, what does he prove? Why, that he hin
novice, and a busy-body, propagating slander. T
point where bark is needed,— where laxatives must
tonics begin,— and it is the office of medical science
tain when that moment has arrived. I am as much
having the doctrine of free agency in unskilful han
Wilson is. I am as much afraid of tearing up the fo
of the Confession of Faith as he can be. If he will
thoughts upon creeds, he will find that I am as mu

to creeds as he is; and if he will but consent to bear with me and try me for a while, he will find me standing upon the Confession of Faith.

A few thoughts upon creeds in general, and our own Confession in particular, and I have done.

Creeds, it is well known, originated early, in the assaults of error upon fundamental truth; and were brought progressively, as collision and discrimination elicited the truth, into the well-defined systems which we now possess.

The design was, and ever has been, to repel the innovations of fundamental error, and unite the faithful in Christ Jesus in fellowship and action, for the extension of his kingdom upon earth.

The right of men to associate for the maintenance and propagation of truth and worship in accordance with their understanding of the Bible, expressed in epitomized form, cannot be denied. It defrauds none of their rights of conscience to worship without creeds, who choose to do so, while it is essential to the liberty of conscience of those who desire to be associated in this manner; of which none will be likely to complain but those who desire to make their own conscience the rule of other men's judgments. The efficacy of creeds, to maintain the purity of truth and the unity of the Church, has been great. They have not, indeed, been omnipotent in repelling the encroachments of error, or securing entirely the unity of the Church; but it follows not from this that they have been powerless. The question is not how much they have failed to accomplish, but how much they have done, and what had been the condition of the Church without these memorials of anterior discussions and attainments. It must have been to theology like the blotting out of civilization by the northern barbarians, or the oblivion of all experience

to coming generations, consigning the world in reli
science to the impotency of an everlasting infancy.

Creeds have indeed been the occasion of controve
we might as well deplore the action of the atn
because thunder-storms and tornadoes sometimes s
To the discussions of the Reformation we owe the e
tion of the world, the rights of free inquiry, the right
science, the supreme authority of the Bible, the prin
its exposition, and the great principles of civil and
liberty.

They were the battle begun,— the conflict of m
brute force,— which will not terminate till the worl
Our own independence is the fruit of it, and the ove
which shake the world, and will shake it till knowl
science cover the earth, are the consummation of tl
conflict.

It was the creeds of the Reformation, also, and th
holy men for them, which held Protestant nations
against the combinations of despotic force, and thus
the permanent action of the great principles wh
developed; and they have stood as the unity of the
the bond of peace, to break the force of temptation
tasy,— to strengthen in a period of declension the th
remain, and to become rallying-points and means of a
restoration. The thirty-nine articles have held the
Church through all her periods of declension, adver
change; and though once almost a dead letter,
powerfully instrumental in her glorious evangelical
tion. So the standards of Scotland, and Geneva,
many, held their several Churches like so many
while the enemy came in like a flood, but are now tl
ful means by which God is preparing to bring

prosperity like the waves of the sea. In New England, where, for a little time, the creeds fell into a partial disrepute, they are coming into remembrance with renovated power and honor. They were, during half her history, established by civil and ecclesiastical law; and through the latter half maintained the confidence and affections of the orthodox churches to an extent equal to what they have ever received anywhere. And though the ministry did not subscribe them as the condition of licensure or ordination, they were examined closely in respect to the doctrines and experimental religion they inculcate; and no man with Pelagian heresies in head, or heart, could any sooner get into the Orthodox Congregational Churches of New England than he could enter the Presbyterian Church.

The Shorter Catechism, from generation to generation, has been taught in the families of the faithful, and was as uniform and almost as venerated an inmate as the Bible. It was the knowledge that the doctrines of this Catechism were the standard doctrines of the Presbyterian Church which made them willing to waive their denominational peculiarities of Church order, and pour their floods of pious emigrants, and prayers, and contributions, into the Presbyterian Churches at the West, without lifting a finger for a Congregational organization,—a form so dear to them, that, had it been assailed on their own territory, they would have laid life down in its defence. They gave up their own Church order, in respect to the West, on the ground of evangelical expediency, and their confidence in the Presbyterian Church as loving and maintaining the same doctrines as themselves. In the twenty-five years that I have pleaded the cause of the missions and institutions of the West, and in my last and most successful effort, I never heard, in a single instance, the objection made, "The money

is going out of our own Church, to build up another nation." If it be true that there are any conspiring t the standards of our Church, I have a right to say, fr I know, that, whoever the conspirators may be, they the ministers or Churches of New England, nor th emigrate from New England.

What we have now chief occasion to guard ag the repetition of the faults of other days, in rel exclusively on the letter of our creeds, to prevent a and perpetuate the purity and power of the Church.

Experience has evinced that the generations of livi will govern the world, in spite of any possible legisl those who have passed away; and that the only way petuate creeds and constitutions is to perpetuate that and admonition of the Lord which will make them as able to the coming as they are to the existing generat

This is the import of the Proverb, that a living better than a dead lion. It was in this respect t Puritan fathers committed an oversight. The publi ment of their day was so united and efficient, and th and creeds so well ordered and efficacious, that i scarcely to have occurred to them that they should forever, or that the impulse they had given to the not carry them down through all generations. Th therefore, into an unseemly confidence in the sho government of the family, Church and commonwe power, instead of the kind and winning influence of a and affection, and that religious and moral culture b God is accustomed to fashion aright the heart. Th quence was, that their creeds and ecclesiastical laws operate gradually upon necks and hearts unaccustom *yoke, until at length* away went colleges, and ex

funds, and Churches, and consecrated property, by the force of laws which the living made, in contravention of the sacred intentions of the dead.

There is a lesson which the Church has been slow to learn, and yet must learn before her unbroken energies and cordial and united action can be thrown upon the world. It is the medium between requiring too little, or too much. The mind of man is so constructed that exact agreement in everything cannot be secured by persuasion or by force. Even the Romish Church, with the world in chains and her foot upon the neck of nations, could by no force or terror prevent the free-born mind from thinking, or compel it to exact unity of speculation; and much less can it be done now, and in our nation. Ecclesiastical authority has lost its terrors, and civil coërcion is unknown, and original investigation is the order of the day,—proving all things, to hold fast that which is good. The result, in any communion, of attempting a government of creeds, *verbatim et literatim*, would be formality and debility and endless divisions, on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other. The monitory voice of experience on this subject is loud and urgent. The stern exactions of the English Church drove out the Puritans, whose virtues she needed, and whose mildly administered order might have benefited them; while the coërced separation produced the Revolution, and the eccentric zeal of the Commonwealth, and the formality and heresy which attended the reäction.

A similar course of urgent restriction by creeds, and of impatient zeal bursting from it by revivals of extravagance and excess, passed over Germany, and prepared the way first for dead orthodoxy, and next for rationalism. And in the ame manner did the heresy of Church and state, in the time *Whitfield* and the Tenants, produce separations and excess,

which made the one fanatical, to the disgrace of revi
half a century, and the other cold and formal, till, in
away from zeal without knowledge, they fell first i
orthodoxy, which was followed next by the Pelag
Arian and Arminian heresies.

For many years our own Church has rested fro
collisions and alternations of ultra zeal. United by t
prehensive, cordial subscription to the doctrines of o
fession, "as containing the system of doctrines taugh
holy Scriptures," implying a *bonâ fide* agreement in
damental doctrines, as they have been brought out in t
troversies of the Church, and expounded in oppo
Arian and Unitarian and Papal and Pelagian err
never intended or understood as expressing an exac
ment in speculations or language on any subject.
contrary, those who framed the Westminster Confess
Catechisms, and those who adopted them as the bond
to our Church, differed in speculation and phrase
some of the same points that the sons of the Churc
about now; but never, till recently, have they been r
ground of formal accusations of heresy, and regular
astical animadversion. And now the question ca
whether one side or the other shall be expelled from the
as hypocrites and heretics. We came in on both si
the knowledge of these circumstantial varieties of opi
language, and in every form of recognition were made
and assured of the protection of the Church; and o
side can we be stigmatized or expelled, without a b
covenant, and the action and injustice of *ex post fac*

The only question is, whether we will dissolve part
or attempt its continuance upon the new conditions
agreement in speculation and language on every s

well as on fundamental doctrine. Whether the exposition of the Confession which I have given, on the subject of the natural ability of man as a free agent, and his moral inability as a totally-depraved sinner; of original sin, as including federal liability to the curse of the law, and as operating to the production of actual sin, not by force upon the will, or any absolute necessity of nature determining it to evil, but by an effectual, universal bias to actual sin; and of regeneration as a change of character, produced not by omnipotent action alone, but by the immediate and infallible influence of God's word and Spirit: whether the exposition of these doctrines, sustained by the language of the Confession, and corroborated by unbroken exposition from the primitive Church to this day, confirmed in the line of the most approved Presbyterian expositors, Calvin, Turretin and Witherspoon, and the great balance of bibical critics and expositors, shall be reversed and stigmatized as heresy; and the *imprimatur* of the Church be given to the doctrine that man possesses no ability of any kind to obey the Gospel,— that original sin forces and determines the will to actual sin, by an absolute necessity of nature, — that adult total depravity is involuntary, and the result of a constitution acting by the power of a natural and necessary cause,— and that regeneration is a change of the natural constitution, by the direct omnipotence of the Spirit, without any influential agency of the word of God? Such an exposition the Church, if it seem good to her, has the power of making; but not the right of giving to her exposition a retrospective action, to affect character, and ecclesiastical standing, and vested rights.

But the time hastens, as it would seem, when our Church must decide whether the examples of past abortive effort for exact identity in speculation and language, with all their

mournful consequences, shall be for our warning, o
example; and whether the coming fifty years shall
of schism, and impotency, and confusion worse co
or whether, like a band of brothers, we shall move
the same auspices which hitherto have concentrate
Church the energies of the East, and the West,
North, and the South, till our victorious efforts, with
other denominations who love our common Lord, sha
his guidance and power, terminate in the universal
of the latter day. And never was there a momen
little panic of alarm, or impatience of feeling, may
good or for evil, the life-giving or destroying waters
flood down through distant generations.

The consequences of new and more restricted
communion are too legible in past experience, and too
to unerring anticipation, to need labored exposition c
expostulation. And nothing assuredly could precip
beloved Church upon the disastrous alternative, but
abandonment of Heaven as we do not believe in; ár
consequent infatuation of alarm and violence of pa
would disregard alike both argument and expostula
with closed eye and deafened ear rush upon destruct
event which we cheeringly believe his mercy will ave

The means of our preservation are obvious and ea

There will be, in a Church so extensive as our
avoidably some diversities of doctrinal phraseology in
munications,—theological provincialisms of men alil
hearted in their belief in the doctrinal and experimen
of our standards. These, as they pass from one de
of the Church to another, we must not attempt to c
force to change the dialect by which, from maternal
truth was breathed into their infant minds, and ma

in their conversion, and made sacred by the association of theological instruction.

Such sudden unclothings of thought, for new and unaccustomed habiliments, are impossible. And yet, patience and kindness on the part of the presbyteries and fathers of the Church will easily secure to all the purposes of edification an assimilation which years of discourtesy and contention cannot compel.

We ought, indeed, to speak the same *things;* but this means not the same words, but the same doctrines. Our Confession and Catechisms were intended as concise definitions, and not as furnishing the entire vocabulary of words in which their doctrines shall be preached. The Bible, itself, does not confine us to its own phraseology; otherwise all exposition and preaching would be superseded by the simple reading of the Bible. And yet, where the terms of the Confession are grateful, and the language of a strange dialect the occasion of misconception and fear, I would not purposely offend or fail to edify, by finding out acceptable words; but, as Paul would do, become all things to all men, that if possible I might save some. Much less would I speak slightly of our creeds, and the phrases which time and association had rendered dear to the people of God. But I should expect, in return, in my own congregation, the same liberty of speech which I accorded to others, and the same deference of courtesy to familiar phrases and cherished associations which I practised; and with a conciliatory spirit, and a small share of common sense and good manners, the Church from end to end might be quiet from all agitation on the subject.

Presbytery now took a recess. After the recess the roll was called by the Moderator, and the members in succession

had an opportunity of delivering their sentiments case. Several availed themselves of the privilege most cases, it was waived. The roll being gone Presbytery took a recess until the afternoon. In t noon, the members of Presbytery were called upo separately on each charge, by saying *Sustained Sustained.*

The first charge being then read, the vote upon it follows:

Sustained.—Messrs. Daniel Hayden, Francis Monfort, I Gaines, Sayres Gasley, Adrien Aton, J. Burt, William Skillin Brown, Peter H. Kemper, A. B. Andrews, Andrew Harve Cumback.—12.

Not Sustained.—Messrs. Andrew S. Morison, Thomas J. B Graves, Artemas Bullard, F. Y. Vail, A. T. Rankin, Augustu Thomas Brainerd, George Beecher, Robert Porter, John Arch Hageman, J. G. Burnet, Bryce R. Blair, J. C. Tunis, J. Lyon, J. D. Low, S. Hageman, T. Mitchell, W. Owen, A. P. Bra Woodbury.—23.

So the first charge was declared to be not sustaine

On the second charge the vote stood the same a first charge.

As the facts included in the fourth charge were by Dr. Beecher, no vote was taken upon it.

On the third, fifth and sixth charges, the vote follows:

Sustained.—Messrs. Hayden, Monfort, Gaines, Gasley, Ator —6.

Not Sustained.—Messrs. Morison, Graves, Biggs, Bull Rankin, Pomroy, Brainerd, G. Beecher, H. Hageman, S. Bradley, Porter, Archard, Burnet, Blair, Tunis, Lyon, Ca *Mitchell, Owen,* Woodbury, Burt, Skillinger, Brown, Andre *Cumback.*—29.

On motion of Prof. BIGGS, the following minute was recorded as the decision of Presbytery in the case:

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Presbytery, the charges of J. L. Wilson, D.D., against Lyman Beecher, D.D., are not sustained, for the following reasons:

I. As to the charge of *depraved nature*, it appears in evidence that Dr. Beecher holds and teaches that in consequence of the fall of Adam, and the divinely-appointed connection of all his posterity with him, man is born with such a constitutional bias to evil that his first moral act, and all subsequent moral acts, until regenerated, are invariably sinful; which bias to evil is properly denominated a depraved nature or original sin, as in the standards of our Church.

II. As to the second charge, relating to *total depravity and the work of the Holy Spirit*, Dr. Beecher holds and teaches that this depravity is so entire, and in such a sense insuperable, that no man is or ever will be regenerated without the special influences of the Holy Spirit accompanying the word, as expressed in the standards of our Church.—Larger Catechism, Question 155, and Scripture proofs.

On the subject of ability, Dr. Beecher holds and teaches that fallen man has all the constitutional powers or faculties to constitute moral agency and perfect obligation to obey God, and propriety of rewards and punishments; that the will is not by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil, according to the Confession of Faith, ch. ix. sec. 1, with Scripture proofs.

At the same time Dr. Beecher holds and teaches that man by the fall is *morally* disabled, being so entirely and obstinately *averse* from that which is good, and dead in sin, so that he is not able to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto.

The extracts from Dr. Beecher's sermons brought to sustain the above charges, when taken in their proper connection, and with the limitations furnished by the context, do not teach doctrines inconsistent with the Bible and standards of our Church.

III. As to the charges of *Perfectionism*, slander and hypocrisy, they are altogether constructive and inferential, and wholly unsustained by the evidence.

Presbytery then resolved that they do not decide the

amount of censure due to Dr. Wilson, but refer the
the Synod for their final adjudication.

Dr. WILSON gave notice that he should APPEAL
from this decision.

Messrs. Gaines, Skillinger, Kemper, Cumbac
Andrew, Harvey, Burt, Brown, Hayden, Mon
Gazley, gave notice of their dissent and protest ag
decision.

Messrs. Stowe, Rankin and Brainerd, were ap
committee to defend the above decision before the S

The roll was then called, the minutes read, and P
adjourned, after singing and prayer.

From this decision of the Presbytery an appeal
to the Synod. The record of the decision of Synoc
ton, on appeal, I have not. The meeting was unusu
—I suppose at least one hundred members were p
and the decision "Not Sustained" was unanimous,
exception of some ten or twelve votes.

From this decision of the Synod an appeal was
Dr. Wilson to the General Assembly of the Pre
Church, in its session at Pittsburg; and after some
that session had passed, Dr. Wilson rose in that A
and said, "I came prepared to prosecute the appea
have brought to this body, but the friends whon
been accustomed to consult, and whose opinion I
respect, have advised and requested me to withc
appeal, saying that it could not be sustained."
he requested permission to withdraw it. Accordin
mission was granted,—it is believed unanimously.

This was done after my Views of Theology had b
lished and extensively read.

REMARKS

ON AN ARTICLE IN THE PRINCETON REVIEW, ON DR. BEECHER'S VIEWS OF THEOLOGY.

THE review of my Views of Theology in the *Biblical Repertory* is adapted to produce injurious effects far beyond its logical ability. It is invested with the general reputation and influence of a work which is the leading organ of the O. S. Presbyterian Church. Moreover, it has been deemed worthy of republication, for purposes of general circulation, among all classes of readers. Yet, logically viewed, it virtually concedes that there was very little ground for an assault upon me. The two main points which it proposes to discuss are my views on Original Sin and on Natural Ability. On the first of these, it is obliged to concede, and does fully concede, that my views are correct. On the second, there is, in fact, only the usual difference between us that exists between the New England divines and those of Princeton. And therefore, in view of facts, I infer that to oppose me fairly and logically on this one point did not seem to be enough to gain the end in view. It seemed to be deemed necessary to destroy by other means the effect of what could not be logically refuted. The way to effect this, which was, in fact, adopted, was to intermix with the review a series of personal *assaults on my* moral integrity, my capacities as a metaphy-

sician, and my trustworthiness as an expositor of ſ
and a narrator of historical facts. This series of
assaults is, indeed, the most striking thing in the rev
is well adapted to produce in all who read it a feelin
tility and of personal contempt towards me. I have
tion to a proper exposure and refutation of any e
reasoning, exposition, or historical statement; but
tinuous and deliberate effort to destroy my reputa
influence by a flippant and contemptuous exhibition c
incidental errors, which pervades this review, is a vic
the rules of honorable controversy which admits of
excuse.

If the reviewer and the *Biblical Repertory* we
selves free from all similar errors, though it would n
such a course, yet it would render it less obviously i
ent. But, in fact, there is not a point on which t
undertaken to express their astonishment at my e
which it is not true, either that their charges of
totally unfounded, or else that they are liable to have
upon them the charge of similar or even greater error

The point on which the reviewer insists at the
length is a charge of self-contradiction on the doc
original sin. On this subject, this was the only possi
of assault; for the correctness of my views, as set for
plea before the Synod, he could not and did n
Nothing, then, remained but to insinuate, as he di
insincerely changed my professed views, after
began, in order to escape condemnation, intending to
them when the danger was past, and to *assert* th
events, I have flatly contradicted my former view
proof of this charge, he relies on passages of my se
Native Depravity, and of my lectures on Scepticism

my letter to the editor of the *Christian Examiner*, in which I deny the possibility of a depraved nature, in the strict sense, anterior to the exercise of reason, conscience and choice, and also deny the transmission of such a nature by descent. I also declare that men are not, in the common sense of the term, guilty of Adam's sin; and that all punishable depravity is voluntary and personal.

These passages he contrasts with others, in which, on my trial, I declare that I regard original sin as a depraved nature, existing before choice, and, of course, as involuntary, and as transmitted by generation from Adam; and that all men, including even infants, are guilty of Adam's sin, and that penal evils are inflicted on them on account of it. In view of the alleged contradictions thus presented, the reviewer indulges himself in some very indecent merriment, with reference to a pretended visit of mine to New Haven, for the sake of assuring myself of my own personal identity, by the aid of Dr. Taylor. He also accumulates assertions of "contradiction palpable and broad," and "discrepancies which no sophistry can bridge over." He, no doubt, intended it to be a demolition of me, absolute and irretrievable; for he assailed at once both my moral honesty and my intellectual capacity. Considering, too, the prejudices of those to whom the review was addressed, nothing could be better adapted to do its work. Judged by the standard of partisan morals, which has been too often followed in the fierce campaigns of this theological warfare, namely, that the end sanctifies the means, such a course of conduct may be defensible; but on no ground of truth or honor does it admit of defence.

The real facts of the case are too plain and obvious to admit of a question. The alleged contradiction is a mere *change in the use* of terms, of which I gave full and ob-

repeated notice. Understanding by a depraved ı nature sinful and punishable, in the strict sense, an voluntary action, I have always denied the exist the possibility of such a nature. Understandin depraved nature a deteriorated constitution, not c punishment itself, because involuntary, but neverthe formly leading to sin, I have always admitted an the existence of a depraved nature, and its descent nary generation, and on my trial I so stated. Und ing by the guilt of Adam's sin a just liability to ment for it, in the strict sense, as if his moral chara deserts had been transferred to us by imputation, ever denied it. Understanding by it a social lia certain evils that came on Adam, and through him c posterity, and which are *technically*, but not in the use of terms, called *penal* evils, or *punishment*, I my trial, admit that all men are guilty of Adam's sir

Is it fair or honorable, upon such grounds, to cha tradictions on me, and to insinuate that I professec did not believe, in order to escape condemnation?

On this point the *Biblical Repertory* shall act a Providentially, it so happened that in their controve the *Christian Spectator*, on the subject of Imput the years 1830–1, the same charge of self-contradic made against them, on the same point. They had Turretin's views, and thus laid themselves open to th as follows: "We said, the ill desert of one man c transferred to another. Turretin says, 'The ill c Adam *is* transferred to his posterity.' Admitted Is not this a direct contradiction? Not at all. says, on one page, 'Imputation of sin does not const *a sinner;*' on the very next, 'The imputation c

sin does constitute all men sinners.' Is there any contradiction here? So the 'Protestant' (Prof. Stuart) would say; but there is none. Let language be interpreted, not by *the tinkling of the words*, but by the fair and universal rules of construction. Imputation does render a man a sinner in one sense, and not in another,—judicially, not morally. So justification renders a man just in the eye of the law, but not inherently. How often may the same verbal proposition be, with equal propriety, affirmed or denied! How obvious is it that the same man may, at the same time, be pronounced both just and unjust, *sub diversa σχεσει*! This is an evil, an ambiguity in the sense of terms, which pervades all language, and which subjects every writer to the charge of contradicting himself and everybody else any one may take a fancy to place in opposition to him. The word *guilt* is as ambiguous as the word *sinner*. It is sometimes used in a moral, at others in a legal sense; and so is the word *ill desert*. We used it in the former, Turretin in the latter."

So, then, at least, in the years 1830–1, the Princeton gentlemen knew what were the true principles of judgment in any case of alleged contradictions. Then they knew that words were ambiguous, and that *sinner*, *guilt*, and *ill desert*, and such like words, could be used in two senses; and that verbal contradictions were not, of course, real ones. All this they well knew when their own reputation called for a knowledge of it. How, then, did it happen that, in 1837, when these same principles would have defended my reputation and moral character, that they were so entirely forgotten? Why did they, at one time, insist that their own language should be "interpreted by the fair and universal laws of construction," and then, when my interests were at stake, insist on *erpreting* my language by the mere "tinkling of the

words"? Why did they, at one time, claim for tl
the full benefit of the ambiguity of terms, and the
deny to me any benefit from the same source?

There is the less excuse for their course in this n
view of the fact that, in order to remove all ground
understanding, I expressly stated in my plea that I
changed my use of terms, but not my opinions.
once denied I told them that I still denied; but, takin
terms in a different sense, I was perfectly willing tc
my old opinions in a new dress. The facts in the
notorious, and undeniable.

I do not pretend to deny that I once assumed that
tation of the Confession of Faith and of the cree
Reformers, on *imputation*, *ability*, &c., to be true, w
maintained by the Triangular or old school divin
interpreted, I do not pretend to deny that I rejected
of the strict and proper imputation of Adam's sin,
guilt of it, to his posterity. I denied no less deci
reality of a nature preceding action which was in
and proper sense sinful and punishable, and also th
of such a nature from Adam to his posterity. I decl
there is no depravity which is not wholly voluntary
depravity or guilt, but that which arises from the tr
ion of the law under such circumstances as constitute
ability, and desert of punishment. This I conced
said in the letter, before mentioned, to the edito
Christian Examiner, and also in other places. I
then enter into an examination of the soundness
interpretation, but assuming, as other New Englanc
had done, the correctness of the old school exposition, I
it. But, after this, in the years 1830–1, we were t
the Princeton oracles that this was a false interp

the Presbyterian standards and of the creeds of the Reformation; and that they do not teach that the substance or essence of man is sinful, or that such a sinful substance or essence descends from Adam to his posterity, or that they are, in the common and proper sense, guilty of his sin; and that guilt means simply social liability to punitive evil, which evil also is punitive merely in a technical sense, and not as being truly and properly a just punishment of sin. By a depraved nature, they also teach us, is meant a nature devoid of original righteousness, and of divine influences to incline it to good; and, therefore, by reason of its inherent natural propensities, tending to evil. Taking original sin to denote such a nature, I did teach that original sin is involuntary, and that it descends from Adam to his posterity by ordinary generation, and is properly called native depravity, or an evil nature. Taking guilt in the sense just specified, I did profess to believe that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity, even to infants before personal accountability; and that the covenant was made, not only with Adam, but with his posterity; and that they sinned in him and fell with him in this sense,— that their character and liability to ultimate ruin were decided by his deed.

Of these changes in interpretation, and in the use of phraseology, I gave repeated and formal notice. Nay, so frequently did I advert to these facts, that it was hardly consistent with good taste in writing; but I thought it desirable and necessary to cut off all pretexts for a misunderstanding of my language. But, what can limit and bind the determination of a thorough partisan? After all my care, the reviewer, as if I had said nothing of the kind, parades my earlier and my later statements on these points, and, regarding merely "*the tinkling* of the words," charges on me "contradiction

palpable and broad." He professes his inability tc for this state of facts. He thinks that I must enough to see the contradiction, and hopes that I too proud to own that I did renounce and contradic my trial my former views. He hopes, too, that I taking refuge in an esoteric sense until the days of were over, intending then to revert to my former view after suggesting this uncandid and unchristian sup he leaves his readers to choose for themselves whic alternatives they please. Such, then, is the force arian bigotry, and of a fixed purpose to find occasio me, that it has led to the total disregard, in my cas most manifest and equitable rules of interpretat defence of which the Princeton gentlemen are alwa to claim in their own behalf.

The reviewer also tries to prove that I have gi contradictory accounts of the object of my sermon o Depravity. But what are these accounts? I sai meant in it to refute the Pelagian notions of native e in man before regeneration. This, moreover, I sai be effected "*by explaining and proving the doc total depravity.*" A part of this explanation and p sisted in showing that depravity could not be resolve involuntary sinful nature before action, nor into di ciency. All this was essential to a proper statement a of depravity, on which I relied as the means of ga proposed ends; and I constructed my sermon so as it, and so stated on my trial. Hereupon, the revie intent on finding occasion against me, says that thi account of the object of my sermon is inconsistent first. Is it, indeed? If I aim in the sermon to ref *gian notions, and if* I rely on a proper statement o

trine of total depravity as the means, is it not proper at one time to state that the sermon was made to attain the first-mentioned end, and at another, that it was made in order to secure the appropriate means of gaining this end? What must be the prejudice of the mind that tries to manufacture a contradiction out of this!

In my sermon on Native Depravity, I use the words "depraved nature" to denote a fixed character, voluntarily formed by the sinner. The reviewer declares that this is an abuse of language. "If a 'depraved nature' means actual transgression, then black may mean white, and square may mean round, and root branch, and language may be thrown aside as less explicit than dumb signs."

The reviewer professes, moreover, on this ground, to be unable to understand what I mean, in my exposition of my sermon, by "a depraved nature, in reference to actual depravity," and insinuates that my interpretation of my own language is a mere evasion of its obvious sense. To this I reply that it is not improper nor unusual to call a permanent and controlling choice, or a habit of choice, from which results a permanent moral character, by the term *nature*. When Peter says that by *great and precious promises* believers are made partakers of the divine nature, the reference must be to that fixed habit of holy choice and emotion which is of the same nature with the holiness of God, and is the result of the influence of the promises of the Gospel. The nature of the cause decides the nature of the effect. Motives affect and change choice and conduct, and not the constitutional powers which precede conduct. Nor is this application of the term nature at all unusual. Turretin, to illustrate the binding force of the divine laws, even in cases of most decided moral inability, says, "The intemperate man, who cannot

refrain from intoxication, his accustomed course of
having become his nature, is, nevertheless, boun
laws of sobriety and temperance." Locus 10, quest
23. So, also, Marius is represented by Sallust as
"I have spent my life in the discharge of duty, an
force of custom *well-doing has become my nature*
facere jam ex consuetudine in naturam vertit), Jug
85. Moreover, this use of the term *nature* is recog
the best lexicographers. Freund, in his Latin Le
translated by Andrews, gives "*character*" as one
of *nature*, and refers for illustration to this pass
Sallust, and also to the phrase of Quintilian, "*fa*
naturam alicujus rei,"—that is, to make a voluntar
in respect to anything good or evil. The same defi
substance is also found in Leverett's Latin Lexicon,
the great work of Facciolati and Forcellini.

Am I not, then, justified by such authorities in m
the word *nature?* If every sinner, at the beginning
agency, begins to act under the influence of a si
trolling choice, if this becomes continually more f
habitual, and controls and establishes the other habit
is not this a voluntary depraved nature, according to
usage of language?

Such a nature is sinful in the strictest and mo
sense. Nor can any nature be holy or depraved,
sense, except a voluntary nature. There must be,
said, understanding, conscience and choice, to rende
nature possible.

Nor is there in such statements concerning a
depraved nature any contradiction to other staten
which I affirm that there is in all men a depraved
nature anterior to choice, which is the reason wh

uniformly choose wrong. In cases of this kind, such words as *depraved*, *sinful*, &c., are not used in the strict sense, but in the more popular and loose sense. A sinful nature in this sense is an original constitution which leads to sin. It is called sinful with reference to its uniform results, and not because it is in itself worthy of punishment. To understand all this, nothing is necessary to the Princeton gentlemen, but to give me the benefit of the rules of interpretation by which they insist that their own language shall be interpreted.

Of course, I do not say that a depraved nature, in this second sense, is impossible, without reason, conscience and *choice;* and, therefore, I do not deny, in my sermon on Native Depravity, the doctrine of original sin, as I elsewhere state and explain it.

The reviewer not only tries thus to produce contempt for my character as a metaphysician by accumulating baseless charges of self-contradiction and absurdity, but he also appeals to theological prejudice to overwhelm me. Because I teach that all sin is voluntary, he represents me as "lisping the very shibboleth of the New Haven school;" and again he says, "This is the very language of the New Haven school." Did not the reviewer know that this was the language of the Hopkinsian school, long before New Haven divinity had been heard of? If so, then why not state the truth?

The only possible ground of charging error upon me is the statement made by me that the Reformers held to physical depravity,— that is, that the very substance or essence of the soul was depraved, and that sin was a property of every man's nature, and was propagated as really as flesh and blood. I now admit that some do disavow this. But it is yet a controversy whether their language does not fairly teach it. At all

events, when I wrote my letter to the *Christian Exa*
thought it did, and therefore rejected their views so un
But subsequently I adopted the interpretation of th
guage given by the Princeton divines. If their int
tion is correct, then I never rejected the views
Reformers on original sin, as the reviewer charges on
merely an erroneous interpretation of their views.

The reviewer also represents me as denying origin
my letter to the *Christian Examiner*, because I sa
there is a connection of some kind between the sin
and the universal, voluntary and entire depravity of
terity; so that it is in consequence of Adam's sin
mankind do sin voluntarily, as early as they are ca
accountability and moral action." In addition to thi
deny the imputation of Adam's sin, and the transmiss
sinful nature, in the strict sense. In view of these f
reviewer says that I leave nothing but a connection
kind; and that "it is mere quibbling, or something w
retain the phrase *original sin*, when everything that
meant by it is rejected." Is it so, indeed? Is a
nature, in the sense of a nature not strictly sin
always leading to sin, nothing? Is a social lia
inherit such a nature, in consequence of Adam's sin,
Is such a connection with Adam's sin nothing? If
the descent of a depraved substance, in the strict se
the strict imputation of Adam's sin, I do no more
Princeton gentlemen themselves. And is it mere q
or something worse, for them to retain the phrase
sin?

It appears, then, that, after all that the reviewer
of "my pitiable plight," and hopeless conflict with th
meaning of my words, and my wandering mazes of

and nonsense," the simple truth is, that, by his want of common candor and fairness in the interpretation of my words, he has left himself in the pitiable plight in which I have presented him. In the judgment of all candid men, language so disrespectful, so gross, so offensive and so ungentlemanly, as he has seen fit to use towards me in the course of his review, cannot but, in the end, reäct upon himself.

I pass now to his strictures on me with reference to the subject of Natural Ability. This part of the review occupies thirty-five pages; and yet the real essence of the argument, as against my position, is contained in two pages (pp. 192, 193, *Princeton Theol. Essays*, vol. II.). As opposed to Fatalism, I teach, that, in any given case of choice, man still retains the power of contrary choice. This the reviewer denies, on the ground that man always must choose according to his predominant inclination at any time, and has neither the power to choose against it, nor to change it by a direct act of will. That in any case a man could have chosen differently from what he did, *if he had inclined so to do*, is all the power of contrary choice which he admits.

The result of this, of course, is, that, on his principles, no man, at any time, could have chosen differently from what he did. It is not merely true in the case of an inclination to sin in depraved man, but also in the case of an inclination to perform holy acts in angels, and, indeed, in all cases whatever of voluntary action of any kind, and in all worlds. As he states it, it is a universal law of action. But, so stated, facts prove it to be untrue. Was there a sinful inclination in holy angels before they fell? If not, if all their inclinations were holy, then it was impossible for them ever to make a sinful choice. But they did. Facts, then, are at war with reviewer's theory.

But let us examine it more closely. What does by *inclination?* In another case he uses *desire* as mous with it, and in another case *affections.* If, example, a sinner is under the controlling influence sensual desires or affections, is it true that he cann contrary to them? Has God given to the mind no choosing, according to reason and conscience, ag strongest sensual desires and affections?

Is it true that desires, affections, appetites and the of the same order as a sense of duty, a consciou what is honorable and right? Have not the latte authority which the first have not? Is not man con it? Is it not reasonable that man should be m power to respond to this consciousness, by choosing a desires, affections and appetites, however strong, in justice, honor and right?

If not, how can the duty of self-denial ever be inc How can man be called on to crucify the flesh, cut o hand, pluck out a right eye, take up the cross an Christ? What power could a preacher have, in co against the sway of the sinful appetites, desires and of his hearers, who should tell them that the doct they have power to choose, according to conscience such influences, however strong, is false and heretica

If it should be said, in reply, that, in every case choice, a man still chooses according to predomina desires, affections and propensities, I reply that a moral obligation is neither a desire, an affection or a sity. It is a peculiar state of mind, of entirely anoth and is designed to act as a counterpoise of these. T in this region, at least, we find a field for the powe *trary choice.* Man can choose either according to

inclinations, desires and affections, or against them, and according to his conscience. Moreover, whichever way he chooses, he had power to choose the other way. This, moreover, is the most important field of choice, and that with which theologians are specially interested; for it is their great work to call on man to follow reason, honor, right and conscience, in opposition to sinful inclinations, desires and affections.

But the reviewer asserts that Edwards and the New England divines have taught no such power of contrary choice as I maintain, and labors largely to prove it by quotations from Edwards, pp. 182—184. I freely concede that Edwards did repudiate such a power of contrary choice as was held by the Arminian writers, whom he was opposing. This power, as he informs us, assumed indifference in the will to motives, and contingency of volitions in the sense of chance, and that the will determined each choice by a preceding act of choice. Any power of contrary choice, resting on such a basis, I repudiate as sincerely as Edwards. But did Edwards reject the thing that I hold under this name? Did he hold that in every act of choice whatever there was no power of any kind to choose otherwise? Was this his idea of moral inability as compared with natural inability? Did he merely hold that men have power to act according to their choice, but no power whatever to choose otherwise than they do?

In reply to this, I say, that if language can contradict such a theory, Edwards has formally and definitely contradicted it. At the close of sec. 4, Part 1, he says, not *of external acts*, but of *acts of the will*, and that, too, in cases of moral ina-
[illegible]y, "In these things, to ascribe a non-performance to the
of power or ability, is not just; because the thing
is not a being *able*, but a being *willing*. There are

faculties of mind, a capacity of nature, and *everyth sufficient*, but a disposition; nothing is wantin will."

It is, then, just to say, according to Edwards, tha *ability* to perform the required acts of will, even where sinners disobey, and are, in a moral sense, The thing wanting is not *ability;* there are faculties and a capacity of nature, and everything else *su* nothing is wanting but willingness. Now, whether calls this the power of contrary choice or not, it is mean by it, and therefore, in the thing, if not in the agree with Edwards.

Once more, the idea of Fatalism, as I reject it, tinctly presented to Edwards, and carefully considere had been charged with agreeing with the Fatalism Kaimes. But, after careful thought, he denies the In his reply to Lord Kaimes, he quotes him as tea follows: "All things that fall out in the natural a world are alike necessary. This *inclination and* unavoidable, caused by the prevailing motive. In the necessity of our action, that in such circumstanc impossible we could act otherwise." Here now Fatali *as I have described it*) is clearly set forth by Lord Its essence is a fixed necessity of CHOOSING as we that necessity which exists between natural causes an It could not be more clearly presented. What, Edwards say? Did he recognize and sanction it as trine? Nay, he rejected it, just as explicitly and in as I do. In opposition to it, he says, "I hav declared that the connection between antecedent th consequent ones, which takes place *with regard to of men's wills,* which is called moral necessity, is

the name of *necessity* IMPROPERLY; and that all such terms as *must*, *cannot*, *impossible*, *unable*, *irresistible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, &c., when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, * * and that such a necessity as attends *the acts of men's wills* is more properly called certainty than necessity."

And do not I teach certainty of moral action as truly as Edwards; and does he not reject what I have defined as Fatalism as truly as I? And is there any possible middle-ground, between the rejection of such Fatalism as Edwards rejects, and the admission of the power of contrary choice as I hold it? I concede that it is not the Arminian idea of power to the contrary, but it is all that I have ever held or taught, and in it I agree with Edwards.

Moreover, Edwards was understood by his intimate friends and disciples as I have understood him. Who better understood him than Hopkins, his favorite pupil, and the editor of his works? Whilst, then, Hopkins, as the expositor of Edwards, clearly asserted the depravity of the sinner, and his moral inability to make him a new heart, did he understand this as a denial of the sinner's power to choose differently from what he did, even to the extent of changing his own heart? Listen to him in reply to the sinner who pleads his absolute inability to do his duty as an excuse. "The unregenerate sinner, who has reformed all ways of external sin, and prays to God for a new heart, which he thinks he sincerely desires, but that it is wholly *out of his power to change his own heart*,—such a one, I say, makes himself in a great measure easy in an unregenerate state, while *he thinks he does all he can.* Such a sinner is not under genuine, thorough convictions, and never will nor possibly

can be, while he believes this representation just.'
kins' Works, III. 299.

So, then, according to Hopkins, it is not just to s
sinner cannot change his own heart, or to say that he
all he can until he has changed his own heart.
false are these assertions, that no man who believ
either is, or possibly can be, under genuine and
conviction of sin. The truth, then, is, according to
that a sinner can change his own heart, and has ne
all he can till he has done it. And is not this the
contrary choice? At all events, it is all that I mean
ever did. Nothing that I have ever said is stronger
unguarded than this statement of Hopkins. It is n
sary for me to multiply such quotations. I will
that I see no rational course, after rejecting that
which Lord Kaimes has set forth, and which Edw
all his followers have always rejected, except to
ground of the power of contrary choice,— not, indee
Arminians held it, whom Edwards opposed, but a
developed it, and set it forth.

But the reviewer once more attempts to set me i
tion, not only to Edwards, but to *all Calvinistic w*
account of my use of the terms *liberty*, *freedom*, &c.
nection with the will. This is worthy of particular
account of his arrogant assumption of extended and
knowledge on the subject, and his efforts, by detect
dental errors in me in questions of history and in
tion, to destroy my influence as a writer. I know of
however, in which a writer of such magnificent pret
involved himself in such a maze of gross and in
errors.

He takes the ground, then, "that we derive our

freedom from the dependency of our actions upon our volitions. If, when we will a particular act, the act follows, we are free."—*Prin. Theol. Essays*, vol. II. p. 187. Accordingly, he defines a free agent as "one who is not hindered by any extrinsic impediment from acting according to his own will."—p. 187. He then asks, "How can we raise the question whether the will itself be free?" and again he asserts "the question whether the will itself is free is nonsense."—p. 184. When he says that this use of terms is sanctioned by Edwards, he is clearly correct. But when he proceeds to say that in it all Calvinistic writers agree (p. 184, and 187), I am amazed at either his ignorance or his audacity. But so it is. Accordingly he proceeds to censure me for saying that man is *free to choose*, with power of contrary choice, and for inquiring whether *choice is free*, and whether man *in choosing is coërced or free*, in order to decide the question of responsibility. In short, he again and again denies the propriety of applying the terms *free*, *liberty*, *freedom*, &c., to the will or to its acts, or to man in reference to the power of willing, and confines them solely to man in view of the connection between volitions and their consequent actions; and most magisterially asserts that *all Calvinistic writers* do the same.

And yet this same reviewer was at this very time a professor in the Theological Seminary of Princeton, and a sworn defender of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church. Let it now be well considered that in the ninth chapter of that same Confession we are taught as follows: "God hath endued THE WILL of man with that NATURAL LIBERTY that it is neither forced nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil." Astonishing! *THE WILL* endued by God with LIBERTY! Were the West-

minster Assembly of Divines, then, no Calvinists they plunged headlong into nonsense? Or has the through a fixed purpose to censure me, plunged hin a most humiliating blunder, for a man of so much p and occupying such a station in the Church?

Nor is this all. The Princeton reviewers, in wh he was now speaking, are, by the same sentence unceremoniously turned out of the lists of Calvinisti For, in an article on the power of contrary choice, a express statement of the point in question, they say (vol. I. p. 251), "Neither is the question whether *has liberty of choice;* that is, in every act of ch *freely*, according to the pleasure of the agent, anc constraint or compulsion. THIS IS AGREED ON ALL So, then, it is agreed on all hands that the will ha of choice; and if our learned reviewer is to be beli whole Church, including all the Princeton reviewer himself, are no Calvinists, and are as deeply pl nonsense, in this particular, as I myself.

Nor will even old Calvin himself, we fear, es better than we; for (B I. c. 15, § 8) he ascribes "a free choice of good and evil;" and, as opposed pulsion and physical necessity, he asserts the exi *free will* in all ages. — B. II. c. 2, § 7, and e Nor is this all. We have the authority of Calvin, a of history, for the assertion, that all preceding writers,- the scholastic divines and the fathers,—not exceptin tine, applied the terms, *free*, *freedom*, &c., to the wi acts, even as I have done. And it lies upon the ver Turretine that he so applies the terms. He says th calumny *when the* Papists say "that they (the F *reject both the* name and the reality of free will;

he, "we shall soon prove that we establish *free will* much more correctly than our adversaries." Again he says, "In order that *choice may be free*, it ought to be exempt from compulsion and physical necessity." This *essential liberty of choice*, he says, "is in all men, always, in every condition." — See Turretine, L. 10, q. 1—4.

How happens it, then, that the reviewer has, with all his pretensions, fallen into such a wilderness of blunders? It would seem to be from the fact that he was misled by supposing that Edwards, Collins and Hobbs (whom it seems he had just read for the occasion, at least in part), were fair representatives of the whole Calvinistic world in their use of the words *free*, *freedom*, &c., as applied to moral agents and the will. Nothing can be further from the fact. Not one of Edwards' New England followers, so far as I recollect, followed him in his definition of liberty. Hopkins said that freedom consisted in voluntary action itself, and not in the connection between volitions and the acts dependent on them. Edwards the younger and West said that liberty was not voluntary action itself, but a quality of it,— that is, its exemption from compulsion and physical necessity. President Day, even in a professed defence of Edwards, regards his definition of liberty as unsatisfactory, and apparently evasive.

But the fact is, that Edwards, though he wrongly defined *liberty*, yet, as I have shown, held to the facts in which liberty of will consists as I hold it; that is, he denied fatal and physical necessity of choice, and held to a power to choose right, but refused to apply to it the name of *liberty*. I do apply to it the name *liberty*, and that is the difference on us. It is a difference in the use of terms. More-my use of terms, the Confession of Faith, the Prince-

ton' Review and almost the whole Calvinistic world, me, in this particular, and against Edwards and the

Moreover, when Edwards engaged in the work of p forgetful of theories, he used the word just as I do. ample, in his sermon on indecision, from 1 Kings, "How long halt ye," &c., he thus sets forth the ı ableness of indecision: "God has made us r creatures, and *capable of rationally determining selves.* * * God hath made us *capable* of makin *choice* for ourselves as to the life we shall choose to God also puts into our hands a happy opportunity *mine for ourselves.* What better opportunity ca desire to consult his own interest than to have *choose* his own portion?" Here, then, we have nc power to act as we choose, but power to determine aı to choose, and to choose aright, on the great questio nal life.

In proof of this, Edwards appeals to the same which I have relied; for example, Deut. 30: 19,– heaven and earth to record this day against you, th set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; *choose* life, that thou and thy seed after thee may li also refers to Ezek. 18: 31, 32, and 33: 11.

Indeed, even the reviewer, when he happens t little changed his point of vision, reports certain fac own mental consciousness, which the Princeton declare to be the highest possible form of *the freed will.* He tells us that even he is "conscious of which we possess TO WILL as we please." Noti power TO ACT *as we will,* which is his old definitio *dom, but* TO WILL as we please.

This means, as our previous exposition of the

theory shows, that man has power to will according to his predominant inclination, or appetite, or desire; using the words "as we please," not to denote "as we choose," in the Edwardean sense, but as our desires, appetites and sense of pleasure are. On this the Princeton reviewers say, in another place, "If, then, we *can will* as we please, we have *all conceivable liberty* and power, so far as the will is concerned." And again, "There can be no necessity in volition; it is *liberty itself*." This view of volition, as liberty itself, is exactly the ground of Hopkins. We do not endorse the doctrine, but merely show once more that the application of the terms *free*, *freedom*, *liberty*, &c., to the will and its acts, which the reviewer condemns in me, is abundantly authorized by his fellow-reviewers, as well as the New England divines; and that it is properly applied to his own reported consciousness, and so applied presents it as in their view the highest form of THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL. We, however, can conceive of a form of freedom of the will still higher than this; that is, the power to choose, not only according to our pleasure, but also according to truth, right and duty, even against our pleasure,—that is, against the demands of any appetites, passions or propensities, however strong.

The reviewer, however, quotes against me a passage from the treatise on Original Sin, in which Edwards repudiates the idea which he ascribed to Dr. John Taylor, "that there is a *sufficient* power and ability in all mankind to do all their duty, and wholly to avoid sin." And again, that there is "in their own natural ability *sufficient* means to avoid sin, and to be perfectly free from it." To this Edwards says, "If the means are *sufficient*, then there is no need of more, therefore there is no need of Christ's dying in order to

On this the reviewer asserts that my opinions and those

of J. Taylor are identical; that no jugglery upon his words can separate between them; that Edwards repudiates such views with abhorrence, and yet, that the sanction of his venerable name is invoked for them. — p. 181, 182.

To this I reply, no jugglery is needed, but merely candor and common sense. The whole question turns on the sense attached by Edwards to the word "sufficient." If by "sufficient provision" and "sufficient means" he understood provision and means which do in fact avail, either generally or in any case actually, to deliver men from sin, and keep them perfectly holy, so that in practice it is safe to rely on them as ever or commonly securing these results, then I repudiate the doctrine with as much abhorrence as Edwards. But if by "sufficient means" is meant that natural ability to choose right which averts Fatalism and creates obligation, then I do not repudiate the doctrine; and if any one will insist that Edwards does (as the reviewer alleges), he merely involves him in self-contradiction; for in the passage already quoted he says, "The thing wanting is not a being *able*, but a being *willing*. There are faculties of mind, and a capacity of nature, and everything else SUFFICIENT, but a disposition. Nothing is wanting but a will." On these grounds he says, and, be it well considered, concerning *the acts of the will*, "To ascribe a non-performance to the want of *power* or *ability* is not just."

Once more, the reviewer censures me for not always attaching the epithet "natural" to the word *ability*, as if by the omission I taught a kind of ability contrary to the regular New England doctrine. For example, when I say, "the moment the ability of obedience ceases, the commission of sin becomes impossible," or when I assert "the full ability of every sinner to comply with the terms of salvation;" or,

again, "that men are free agents, possessed of such faculties, and placed in such circumstances, as render it practicable for them to do whatever God requires;" he declares that all this is an improvement on the regular New England doctrine of Natural Ability. — pp. 179—181.

To this I reply, the regular New England doctrine is not *Fatalism* concealed under the phrase "natural ability," meaning thereby merely power to do as we will, whilst, at the same time, we are unable, in every sense, to will otherwise than we do. This is the very Fatalism of Lord Kaimes, which Edwards indignantly repudiated as utterly at war with his doctrine. In opposition to this, Hopkins, too, as we have seen, emphatically declared that a sinner *can change his own heart*, and has never done all that he can, until he has obeyed the command so to do. In all my statements above quoted, I mean no more than this. Nor is it needful, after once and again defining my use of terms, on all occasions to introduce the word "natural" to qualify the ability asserted. Neither Edwards nor Hopkins always does thus, as may be seen by the passages recently quoted from them.

In addition to this, if any shall so far abuse the phrase "natural ability" as to make it a deceitful veil of Fatalism, using it as implying no power to choose right, but only a power to act right if we first choose right, whilst we are in every sense unable to choose right, then it is high time to expose such a delusive jugglery on words, and to say that by the ability of which we speak we mean a real power to choose as God commands, and not a verbal and delusive shadow of ability, which is at heart nothing but disguised Fatalism.

The mode which the reviewer adopts, in order to neutralize the power of my quotations from the fathers and other theo-

logical writers, deserves notice and reprobation. H
that when I quote authorities I shift the question to tl
man power *to act* according to his will? and ac
quotations to prove this point; and then shift back a
represent them as proving that man has power
choose, instead of power *to act* according to his choic
thus interchanging phrases of different import, and
the question at the proper turn, he is enabled to arr
side a formidable list of authorities, from the da
fathers down to the present generation." "The
raised is, whether CHOICE IS FREE, *except wh*
authority is to be introduced."— p. 186.

Now, to this I reply, that either the reviewer had
authorities, or he had not. If he had, he was disho
he had not, then he was inexcusably ignorant. For
as they lie upon the very face of my quotations, are
and irremediably at war with his assertion. Take o
ous case. I appeal, as just stated, to the Confession
(chap. IX. § 1) to prove that THE WILL of man is
by God with LIBERTY in its determinations, and
neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of natu
mined, to good or evil. Is this a shifting of the
Does this merely answer the question whether man
as he wills, and not whether HIS WILL IS FREE? A
Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church no
to a professor in the Theological Seminary at P
Are the Westminster divines no authority to Presby

It is, indeed, quite a remarkable fact, that, alth
Confession of Faith was the very standard of t
although I appealed to it again and again, and claim
was on my side, and declared explicitly that its state
the liberty of the will contained exactly my doctrin

ral ability, yet on this most vital point of all, the reviewer makes no effort whatever to answer me. He is here as silent as the grave concerning the Confession of Faith. Why is this? Did he really forget that this was the very standard of judgment? Did he forget that on the point at issue it was decisive? Did he forget that I had appealed to it again and again? Did he forget that in express terms it sustains both my language and my views? Did he forget all this, and then, in pure ignorance, charge me with shifting the question, so that the testimony of the Westminster divines does not meet the point,—Is the will free? If he did all this in pure ignorance, then the public will judge how fit he was, in point of knowledge, to write a proper review of such discussions. If he did not do it in ignorance, then the public will judge what shall be thought of the moral integrity of a man who could knowingly be guilty of such an act. Moreover, they will judge how far it is consistent with common honesty for those on whom the responsibility now rests for the statements of the Princeton Review, if there are any such, to perpetuate this and other like charges, uncorrected, to all coming ages.

A similar course of remark might be repeated, with reference to authority after authority. They assert the freedom of the will, or the power of choosing otherwise than we do, as opposed to Fatalism, with wonderful explicitness. For example, Justin Martyr says, "If mankind had not the power, by *free will*, to avoid what is disgraceful and *to choose* what is good, they would not be responsible for their actions." Is this merely a power to act as we choose? Is it not a power *freely to choose* right or wrong?

Irenæus places the ground of responsibility in "free will,"

and represents God as approving men for "*choo*
persevering in that which is good."

Clement of Alexandria says that God has given
and sovereign power, not having allowed what we
what we *avoid* to be subject to a slavish necessity."

Tertullian says, "I find that man was formed by
free will, and with power over himself, observin
no image or likeness to God more than in this
"Transgression would not have been threatened w
if the contempt of the law were not placed to the ac
man's *free will*."

Origen avows and defends free will, and says, "
has the power of *choosing* good and *choosing* evil."

Cyprian asserts,—"Man, being left to his own *li*
endowed with *free will*, seeks for himself death
tion."

Eusebius says, "Every rational soul has natural
free will, formed for *the choice* of what is good. *
a person, who had the power of *choosing* what is
not choose it, but voluntarily turned away from wh
pursuing what is worst, what room for escape cou
him?"

Jerome says, "That we possess free will, and ca
either to a good or bad purpose, according to our d
tion, is owing to his grace, who made us after his i
likeness."

Augustine.—"Free will is given to the soul.
Every one has it in his will, either to choose those th
are good, and be a good tree, or to choose those th
are bad, and be a bad tree."

Luther.—"*The* will does what it does, whethe
bad, at perfect liberty."

Dr. Woods says, "I grant that man has a power of choosing between different courses, and of yielding to either of two opposite motives."

Such is a small specimen of the authorities which I introduced. Do they not meet the question, *Is choice free* as opposed to Fatalism? Yet, either after reading them, or else without reading them, the reviewer has dared to say, "The inquiry raised is, whether choice is free, EXCEPT WHEN SOME AUTHORITY IS TO BE INTRODUCED!"

It is, indeed, true that one of my authorities (Howe) is liable to exception, as teaching merely that man can *act* as he *will*. But of the great mass of them it is not true. They meet the true question, whether, as opposed to Fatalism, it is true that man has free will,— that is, has the natural power of choosing otherwise than he does,— and they decide that he has.

By a similar false assertion, the reviewer tries to destroy the influence of my argument from the Bible.—p. 195. There is, however, no need of further reply. He takes good care, as before, to rest in mere assertion. He gives his readers no opportunity to judge for themselves. If his purpose was, not to aid in a candid inquiry what is the truth, but merely to destroy the influence of my arguments, for party purposes, he took perhaps the most effectual course to gain such an end.

But now, if any one should say, with the reviewer (p. 186), "Liberty must be the attribute of an agent, and not of a faculty." But is the will an independent agent, or a faculty? And is it proper, then, to say that a faculty, or its action, is free, or has freedom? Is it not the man *who is free*? I answer, Yes, it is the man who is free. And when I, and other Calvinists, say the will is free, we mean

that the man who wills is free in willing, and, in t of the Confession, "is not compelled, or determined absolute necessity of nature, to good or evil." So, a I say choice is free, I mean that the man who choos in his choice. But what then? The question sti man free in *willing*, or only in *acting as he wills*? dent Day, in reply to this allegation, that the will i agent, and that liberty properly belongs to an agent, to a faculty, very correctly says, "Still it may be p inquire whether the man is free in his *willing*, as w his external actions. Is he possessed of freedom in tions, as well as in his bodily movements?"—*E Edwards*, p. 81.

But though, in fact, it is the man who is free, it is no or improper to express the idea that man is free i by saying that the will is free, or that choice is free ing is more common, even in the highest authorities speak of faculties as if they were agents. Edwa "That which *the will prefers*, to that, all things co *it preponderates and inclines*." Yet elsewhere "Actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not prope powers of agents." Yet who, in the first case, wo pose that Edwards did not know that the will was and not an agent, although he ascribed actions to it too, would ever misunderstand him? After a man declared his belief in the revolution of the earth on must he never again say that the sun rises and sets of some hypercritical charge of error? So, after a ment that the real fact is that it is the man who is *choosing*, must we never again say the will is free, *is free, lest* some new-fledged metaphysician sho *pounce upon* us Calvinists, not excepting the

divines, with charges of inconsistent and inaccurate use of language?

I make these general remarks as an answer to a large part of all the reviewer's charges on me of a confused and inaccurate use of language. Let him be as candid towards me as he would be towards Edwards, or Locke, or the Westminster divines, or the Princeton reviewers themselves, and most of his charges will at once disappear. For example, even if I do sometimes speak of "the natural inability of the will," or "the natural power of the will," the phrases are not, as the reviewer alleges, "destitute of meaning," or "absurd."—p. 174. They denote, as before, the natural inability or power of the man in whom the will is. So, too, the expression, "the will is under no such necessity as destroys its own power of choice" (p. 174), is not devoid of an obvious and proper meaning. Let it be interpreted on the same principles which are applied to the language of Edwards or the Westminster divines, in the cases already referred to, and it means "the man who wills is under no such necessity as destroys his own power of choice." If this, as the reviewer tells us, is a "vague and slipshod use of terms" (p. 175), then let the Princeton reviewers look well to their own language and example; for they say, "All will admit that *the natural faculty of will exerts the choice.*"—Vol. I. p. 255. And so repeatedly, in other instances, they use language just as I do.

In one instance the reviewer takes advantage of a captious interpretation of terms, or of the condensation of my style in certain passages, to make out the charge of a vagueness in the use of the terms *cause* and *effect*, which he says is "remarkable, even in Dr. Beecher."—p. 172. I will state the passages, and, where necessary, restore the unexpressed

links of thought, as my sufficient defence aga
charge.

"The supposition of accountability for choice, co
natural necessity, is contrary to the nature of things,
has constituted them. The relation of cause and e
vades the universe. The natural world is full of i
the basis of all science, and all intellectual operat
respect to mind. Can the intellect be annihilated, ar
ing go on? No more can the power of choice be ann
and free agency remain."

Here the reviewer suppresses what follows to com
statement, and charges me with asserting that free
taken as a capacity, is *the effect* of the power of choi
I do not say this; I merely say that it cannot exist
the power of choice, and then proceed to state wh
powers are necessary to *constitute* free agency; a
assert that if these do not exist, it is not just to
voluntary obedience to the law, since this would be
ing an effect without a cause. In this case free choi
effect, and the powers that constitute free agency
cause. Is this vague, or obscure?

Again, I say, "The supposition of continued respo
after all the powers of causation (that is, as to choice) a
is contrary to the common sense and intuitive percept
mankind. On the subject of moral obligation (as to
all men can see and do see that there can be no effect
a cause (and therefore no obligation to choose right w
power so to choose). That nothing cannot produce som
an intuitive perception, and you cannot help it. Th
basis of that illustrious demonstration by which you p
being of a God." Here he charges me with im
asserting that responsibility, or moral obligation, is

of the power of choice; whereas my language, when the obvious links of thought are fairly supplied, only means that responsibility cannot exist without the power of choice.

Again I say, "Material causes, while upheld by Heaven, are adequate to their proper effects; and the mind of man, though fallen, is, while upheld, a cause (of free choice) sufficient, in respect to the possibility of obedience, to create infinite obligation (to obey)." Here he represents me as improperly asserting that the mind of man is a cause of the possibility of obedience and of infinite obligation; whereas the whole train of thought plainly shows that I regarded the mind of man as a sufficient cause *of choice*, and on that ground giving rise to infinite obligation to obey, as appears from restoring the obvious and proper links of thought.

Upon this array of particulars he then founds the charge, which I have proved to be false, that I teach that the will or mind of man is, in the proper sense, *a cause*, not of free choice, but of free agency, viewed as a *capacity*, and of responsibility, and of the possibility of obedience, and of infinite obligation,— things unlike in nature, and which, properly speaking, are not effects at all.

He then, with affected forbearance, says, "Respect for Dr. Beecher restrains us from employing the only becoming and adequate mode of exposing such argumentation as this." Nevertheless he assures us that it must leave "its disparaging mark on me," as a reasoner and a divine. Nay, he makes it an occasion of an ungentlemanlike and undignified sneer at me, for having once said to Dr. Porter that my method of philosophizing was the Baconian.

I would not enter into such unwelcome details, if it were not for the fact that the main effect of the review depends upon an accumulation of such things. "No one," says the

reviewer, "who reads the extracts we have given, or if he reads the treatise from which they are tak wonder that Dr. Beecher should have felt it necessar form Dr. Porter, and through him the public at la his method of philosophizing was the Baconian." this but an effort to neutralize my whole argu advance, even before attempting fairly to meet my re and that by a sneer based upon a captious and unfa pretation of my language? Nor are such things great effect. In partisan minds, prepared for their i they immediately beget a spirit of insolent contemp prejudice before argument, upon which no reasoning, fair, can exert any power. To produce such effects, to accomplish partisan ends, I know of nothing better than this review, taken as a whole. Therefore it c effectually answered until I have shown what is th of its malignant power, at least by a few examples.

In another case, merely to illustrate the absurdities ism, I *supposed* choice to be produced by wheels an power, but did not say that I regarded it as possi view of this, he contemptuously says, "Dr. Beech only writer we have ever met with who seemed to that the will could be moved by water-power, or pro steam," and represents me as gravely attempting "that man is not accountable for those of his volit are worked out of him by water-power;" just as expressed a belief that there were or could be any s tions! No doubt such things will have, on many m designed effect. But is this the way to represent a brother, in candor and in truth?

In a very few instances, his verbal criticisms w *founded.* In such cases, I have availed myself of

ures, however unfriendly, to render my use of terms more clear and precise. But, wherever I have neglected his criticisms, I regard them as obviously unjust, even if I make no reply.

In one case he exposes an error of interpretation caused by relying solely on the English version of Jer. 7 : 10,—"We are delivered to do these abominations." Here I erroneously took the word "delivered" in the sense "given up," or "abandoned." If the reviewer had, for the sake of the truth and in a friendly spirit, pointed out this, or any other error, I would have received it with gratitude. But this was not his end or spirit. He avowedly exposed it to "show how little reliance is to be placed on Dr. Beecher as an interpreter of Scripture." Thus he draws a universal inference of incompetency from a single error; just as if incidental errors of interpretation were not so common that few, if any, leading divines can be pointed out who are entirely free from them. Certainly, Edwards, Turretin and Calvin, were very far from such freedom. I refer to this because it illustrates the general drift of the review; that is, in every possible way to destroy my character and influence as a logician, an interpreter and a divine.

For a similar purpose, he severely scrutinizes my list of Fatalists, for the sake, as he distinctly avows, "of showing how far it is safe to trust Dr. Beecher's accuracy in matters of history." He has detected, I concede, one or two errors. But he has himself been guilty of more than he has detected in me, notwithstanding all his insolence and sarcasm. For example, I speak of the Stoics as Fatalists. He at once turns to Dugald Stewart, and finds in him a reference to the first *sentence* of the Enchiridion of Epictetus as a proof that they *held to* free will. Next, either by his own blunder, or by

that of the printer, this is learnedly set forth as "*instance*" in the Enchiridion of Epictetus, but quoted, and was probably never read, or even seen reviewer. He then quotes the opinion of Stewart that the Stoics carried their notions of the liberty of to an unphilosophical extreme.* Now, that the had never made any original investigation of this ma had merely, in his hasty search for something to use me, relied on what came first to hand in Stewart, from this,— that the more recent and accurate investig Ritter fully justify my assertions, and the common as to the Fatalism of the Stoics, and show that the which they asserted was merely nominal. He pr clear authorities, that, according to them, matter was c in God, as an essential part of him, and had laws of i above his will; and that he developed the world out of according to certain fixed laws of fate, and that by laws all will be again destroyed; "for all is ordere laws of necessity, and has the life of a self-developing Viewing God and the universe together, "the whole to them merely as a material God, who, both in an himself, is subjected to the force of necessity." T indeed, he allows, try to escape such a result by denial of the subjection of God to necessity; but h proves that the very ground-principles of their sys plied his subjection to real necessity, as originating from an eternal chain of causation, but also from th of the very essence or matter of God, in subordinatic necessary laws of which, all of his developments must

* Still further to embarrass a thorough inquirer, the re Stewart's works is to the wrong page. He refers to vol. VI. *should have been 471*, or else vol. V. p. 594.

So also, though in words they extolled the freedom of the will of man, still they held that his nature and propensities were assigned to him by a fate above any power of his own, or of God, for even he cannot suspend or repeal the laws of matter: and, though they denied a necessary subjection of the will to the power of external objects, they none the less subjected it to an absolute internal necessity, created by the fated constitution and propensities of man.—See Ritter, translated by Morrison, vol. III. pp. 515, 518, 526, 532—536, 554—556.

Relying still on the aid of Stewart, he proceeds to prove, from Lucretius, that the Epicureans held to a will set free from fate, and refers to Cicero as of the same opinion. If he had taken the pains to look thoroughly into the matter, and to read Cicero, to whom he refers, he would have found that the free will which the Epicureans professed in words Cicero regarded as merely a ridiculous pretence. They held that the soul, as well as all things else, was but a fortuitous concourse of atoms; and that free will, so called, was but a fortuitous motion of these atoms, out of the perpendicular line, in which they naturally descend,—a motion totally without reason, and entirely uncertain in time or place. Cicero, moreover, not only adverts to this ridiculous theory of pretended free will, but also says concerning it, "No one seems to me more to establish, not only the doctrine of fate, but the necessity and compulsory power of all things, and to have destroyed all real voluntary agency, than he who confesses that he could in no other way refute the doctrine of fate than by resorting to these pretended irregular motions of atoms."—*Cic. de Fato*, 20, 48.

On this point, also, Stewart, his one great oracle, says, "*Lucretius*, indeed, speaks of this liberty as an exception to

universal Fatalism; but he, nevertheless, considers necessary effect of some cause, to which he gives t of *clinamen*, so as to render man as completely a passive mechanism as he was supposed to be by Co Hobbes." — Vol. v. p. 593. To this Stewart add reason which he gives for this is, that, if the c otherwise, *there would be an effect without a caus*

If the reviewer's practical theory is a good one,- is sufficient to destroy the influence of a man's re and of his whole argument, to point out some i errors,— then, for augnt I see, he has, in the bl criticism which I have exposed, thoroughly neutra own authority as a critic. It ought here, also, t marked, that the opinion of Ritter concerning the Fa the Stoics is by no means peculiar to him. Esche his manual of classical literature, does not hesitat that "the doctrine of fate was one of their (the Stoic peculiarities. They considered all things as controll eternal necessity, to which even the Deity submit this was supposed to be the origin of evil."- *Translation*, p. 228.

In the History of Philosophy adopted by the U of France, and translated by C. S. Henry, D.D., it as a principle of the Stoic philosophy, "that ever subject to the laws of fate; for God, or the primit ligent fluid, can act only according to his nature, nature of the passive principle which he ensouls; a emanated from the universal soul are, for the sam subject to fatal laws in their sphere of action."- p. 164. The historian also admits that the syste nized ideas of justice and holiness, and also of *obligation; but* regards these as merely a contra

the undeniable principles of the system. So general is this view, that Webster, also, in his quarto dictionary, presents it, and refers to Enfield as teaching that the Stoics held that all things are governed by an unavoidable necessity. Even, then, if I had erred in adopting as true an opinion so current, and nearly universal, it would have been no good ground for insult and reproach; but, since I was correct, and my critic at fault, it is easy to see upon whom the reproach, if any is to be borne, ought to fall. I disapprove, however, of the whole style of criticism pursued by the reviewer, and have no disposition to imitate his evil example.

As to Bolingbroke, whom I classed with the Fatalists, it is true that in some passages he clearly teaches free agency in form; and yet he no less clearly teaches the materialism of the soul, which is the fundamental principle of material Fatalists, and denies a special providence, and individual retribution, in this or the future state, if there is any, which he does not admit. Tholuck, in his "History of Theology in the Eighteenth Century," *published in the Biblical Repertory, with approval*, says of him, "He seems, on the whole, to have approached very near to *materialistic atheism*, denying the moral attributes of God, and admitting only his wisdom and power." When, in connection with this, we consider his licentious life, and his notorious habit of professing, for effect, what he did not really believe, his assertions of free agency are no proof that in reality he held that doctrine, and did not hold to the legitimate results of his materialistic atheism. Did he not assert, in a great variety of forms, his belief of the divine origin and authority of Christianity, as set forth in the gospels? And yet, is any one simple enough to believe that he was not an enemy and

a disbeliever of Christianity? Yet, on the whole chosen to omit his name from my list of Fatalists.

As to Descartes, it is true that he was no Fatalist an error to call him such. I did, in fact, by a memory, confound him with his contemporary Gasser in fact, revived and defended the theory of atoms by Epicurus, and based his natural philosophy upon i even Gassendi did not deny the existence and creati of God; but, atoms being created, he explained the by them. The reviewer next pretends not to know Spinoza was a Fatalist or not! Probably he did n whether he was a Pantheist or not: or, perhaps, he know whether Pantheism is, of necessity, a system c ism. All this professed ignorance, so discreditabl as a scholar, seems to be assumed, for the sake of as far as possible, any acknowledgment of the acc any of my statements. For the same reason, he ur at great length, but fruitlessly, to vindicate the m Hobbes from the charge of Fatalism.

And yet it is worthy of notice, that in the very of Princeton essays which contains this vindication o there is an article by Neander, already referred to, the same charge of Fatalism for which I am arr made against him, with the implied approval of th His words are, "He maintained that God and th were not spirits, and *denied the liberty of man.*" he says, "His materialism produced, for a time, con effect; *the doctrine of human liberty*, and the exi spirits, were rendered doubtful in the minds of m even a species of atheism became, to a certain exte alent." — Vol. I. p. 566, 567.

If all this, as said by Neander, is so true and

as to be published, without criticism or censure, in the *Biblical Repertory*, and is meritorious enough to be republished in one of their permanent volumes, then how happens it that, when I say the same things, they are at length discovered to be false and censurable, and are published as such in the same collection? Does it not look as if the great point to be carried by the Princeton divines was to accumulate errors on me at all hazards, even if, in so doing, they introduced inconsistencies and contradictions into their own select works?

I pay so much attention to these historical statements merely because the reviewer seems to rely on them so greatly for effect. And yet, as affecting the logical force of my argument, they are of no weight whatever. What if I do happen, occasionally, to err in making out a list of Fatalists? Does it therefore follow that there are no Fatalists, and that there is no such thing as Fatalism, and that the elements of Fatalism have not been, in all ages, such as I have represented? It would have been more to the purpose, if the reviewer, after wasting so much time on such alleged errors as even if correctly alleged were merely incidental, had at length met me with sound arguments on the main question; but this is precisely what he failed to do.

Besides these modes of attack on me, the reviewer tries, here and there, to prove incidental inconsistencies and contradictions. For example, I assert, in my argument, that in the sense assumed by Fatalists motives are not *causes* of volition; that is, strictly and properly, necessitating causes. In another place, however, I teach that the truth is instrumental as a moral cause, when used by God in regenerating the soul. Here, he exclaims, is a palpable inconsistency; — just as if I did not plainly use the word cause in two senses

in these two cases — one in a material, the other in a moral sense! — See p. 176.

Again, I affirm that the simple ability of choosing wrong *is nothing* as an explanation of the fact of uniform and unreasonable wrong choice. How, then, asks the reviewer, can the ability to choose right be *everything*, as I elsewhere teach? Here, he exclaims, is another inconsistency. Just as if what I said in the second case were not this: that ability to choose right is of supreme importance as *a basis of responsibility* for right or wrong choice, and not as an explanation of the reason why men choose either right or wrong! — pp. 176, 177.

Such are the flimsy proofs in view of which he goes on to allege that, though I may be a good orator and rhetorician, I am worthy of no confidence as a logician or a metaphysician. — p. 177. All that I can say, in reply to such criticism, is, that it is sufficient for me to provide clear ideas and sound arguments; I am under no obligation to provide for the reviewer the capacity or the candor needed to understand them. The same remarks may be made with reference to his opening harangue, at the beginning of the second part of his review. It is a mere piece of objurgatory rhetoric, designed for effect, and has no basis whatever in a candid and intelligent interpretation of my language and argument, taken as a whole.

What, now, can be the real reason of such a course towards me? To my mind it is clear that, had I been willing to coincide with certain men, of a certain party, in certain practical measures, I should have been left undisturbed in my theology, especially as every tribunal, from the Presbytery to the General Assembly, had sustained my orthodoxy and condemned my accuser, — and

that with the concurrence of the Princeton gentlemen themselves, in the General Assembly. But, after all, with reference to certain favorite practical measures, I still proved refractory; and then, however it may be accounted for, the review came, and it was such as I have shown. The reviewer, I am aware, ridicules the idea of a purpose to write me down. I shall go into no controversy on that point. I have my own knowledge of facts and coincidences, and my own belief; but, whatever may have been the origin of the review, it is enough for me to have shown what it is, and to have left on record, for all who love the truth, this vindication of my character and my views. In conclusion, I commend my labors, on the important and fundamental doctrines discussed in this volume, to the candid consideration of my fellow-men, and to the care and vindication of my God.

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